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Editor's Page

From Next Big Thing to historical footnote

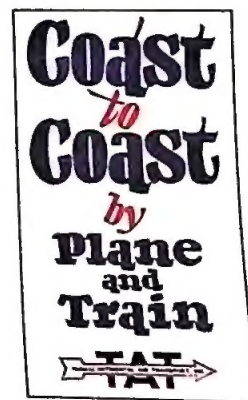
OME GREAT INNOVATIONS are launched upon the public stage amid fanfare appropriate to their importance. The *Pioneer Zephyr's* high-speed, high-profile dash from Denver to Chicago's Century of Progress exposition was a fitting debut for a train that would utterly change passenger railroading. Other advances slip quietly onto the scene, like the first diesel-electric switch engines.

And then there are the cases where reality doesn't live up to the hype. In 1929, the Next Big Thing was the coast-to-coast railroad-airline service described by Arthur Dubin on pages 20-33. America was at the time gripped by a kind of Flight Fever, thanks to a decade of barnstormer stunts and genuine achievements. Bigger airplanes offered the promise of long-distance commercial flight, but facilities were not in place for night flying, and the fastest scheduled service across the continent was by train, a journey that took 100 hours. This time could be cut in half by using aircraft by day and trains by night, and thus was born the dual-mode transcontinental service.

It was a sensation. Backed by millions of dollars from the nation's leading railroad, the inaugural departures were witnessed by throngs of spectators, including some of the most famous names of the day. Yet almost as quickly as it began, the vaunted rail-air service vanished, rendered a historical footnote by advances in aviation.

In the 1940's, some saw poppet valves and duplex drives as the wave of the future for steam locomotives. Of course, the diesel soon ensured that there was no future for steam, but what might have been intrigues us still. J. Parker Lamb looks at these fascinating footnotes in our special issue STEAM GLORY; see page 99 for details on how to get a copy.

Jaunty graphics promoted rail-air service, but technology soon rendered it obsolete.



ARTHUR DUBIN COLL.

Robert S. McGonigal

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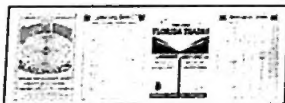
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Contributors

Robert C. Anderson ["Copper Range Recalled," pages 74-83] began taking black-and-white photos in 1955 with a Brownie; he switched to color slides in 1958. After receiving a degree in mineral processing from Michigan Tech in 1966, he worked in the iron-ore pelletizing industry in Michigan and Minnesota until 1999. Though he still does some consulting work, Bob enjoys a retirement that includes rail photography and sorting through 40-plus years of accumulated railroad "stuff." He and his wife, Judy, live in suburban St. Paul, Minn. This is his first CLASSIC TRAINS byline.

Les Clark ["Hurry Up—but Why?" pages 58-59] is a retired instructor in GM's Product Service Training Division. He grew up in Glens Falls, Idaho, where he was a UP fireman 1953-65. His story "Hot Train and the Value of a Dollar" appeared in our Fall 2001 issue.

Garry Collins ["Did You Plan to Mail Me the Orders?" pages 34-39] stuck with railroading after his night in BJ tower, ultimately working for nine carriers from coast to coast. He was a brakeman, switchman, fireman, and operator before going into management. Retired, he lives in Sun Lakes, Ariz. This is his first article for us.



Geoffrey H. Doughty ["New England's Little Gem," pages 14-18] joined Maine Central's operating department two years after graduating from college with a degree in history. He moved to the safety department in 1982 and was its director when he left the MEC in 1987 to become a safety consultant. Geoff has authored several books on passenger railroading, plus the article "Glass City Gets Its Station" in DREAM TRAINS, the 2003 CLASSIC TRAINS annual.

Ronald DeGraw ["Every 2½ Minutes," pages 40-43] comes from a Philadelphia & Western family: his father was a P&W motorman for 23 years, and other relatives began working for the line as

early as 1909. Upholding the tradition, Ron joined Philly transit agency SEPTA in 1970 as director of development for the Red Arrow Division, successor to the P&W. He's also written major books on the Red Arrow. Ron's article, originally presented at the American Public Transportation Association's Intermodal Operations Planning Workshop in Brooklyn, New York, in July 2002, is his first CLASSIC TRAINS byline.

Arthur D. Dubin ["Coast to Coast by Rail and Air," pages 20-33], of Highland Park, Ill., is one of the foremost collectors of passenger-train materials in America. An architect by profession, he's the author of the Kalmbach Publishing Co. books *Some Classic Trains* (1964) and *More Classic Trains* (1974), as well as numerous magazine articles. This is Dubin's second CLASSIC TRAINS byline, following "The Flower of Travel Comfort" in the Winter 2000 issue. He acknowledges the assistance of R.E.G. Davies, curator of air transport at the National Air and Space Museum, and author of the book *Airlines of the United States Since 1914* (Putnam, 1972).

Ken Ingram ["Mary Elizabeth of the NC," pages 70-73], a native of Jackson, Tenn., is a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy stationed in San Diego. This is his first CLASSIC TRAINS byline.

Kevin P. Keefe ["Robert A. Hadley: An Eye for the Machine," pages 60-69] is associate publisher of CLASSIC TRAINS. He was editor of TRAINS magazine from 1992 to 2000. Like Hadley, Kevin is a native of southern Michigan.

Theodore Shradly ["The Canton Creeper," pages 44-49] lives in Brewster, Mass. Ted thanks John B. Johnson, editor and publisher, *Watertown Daily Times*; Linda A. Casserly of the Canton Historical Society; and Elise D. Chan of the Jefferson County Historical Society for their help with his article. This is Ted's third byline in CLASSIC TRAINS. ■



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True Color

2003, future and past

Warmly lighted by a low afternoon sun, Long Island Rail Road train 4223 from Ronkonkoma approaches Jamaica on December 3, 1950. In charge is a rare bird: six-month-old Fairbanks-Morse CPA20-5 No. 2003, one of only eight 2000 h.p., 5-axle versions of FM's "Consolidation Line" of carbody diesels to be built (all for LIRR, which also got 5 of the 22 CPA24-5's). The C-Liner wears the road's new Lester Tichy-designed image, which was second to none in its emphasis of the road number over even the company's name. Although the 2000's and 2400's, with their giant next-millennium numbers, looked like the future, they had short lives, being traded in on Alco C420's in 1963. LIRR 2003 and her C-Liner sisters are history now, soon to be joined by our own year 2003.

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On the ball, Vermont and otherwise

More and more, I am turning to CLASSIC TRAINS as my primary rail magazine. Jim Shaughnessy's article, "Ball Signals of Vermont" [pages 22-31, Fall 2003], with its photos and maps, was spectacular. In fact, the last two issues of have had a fine range of geographic interests and topics. I'm glad at least one magazine is not afraid to run long articles.

Roger C. Parker
Dover, N.H.

Almost anything concerning Vermont railroads catches my eye, of course, but Shaughnessy's article ranks high on my short list of the most interesting railroad stories of the past, oh, 20 years or so. It was something to linger over.

Ben Bachman
Seattle, Wash.

I have admired Shaughnessy's work since I first become aware of his photos of CN's Palmerston, Ont., "Two Divisions to Bluewater" in Peter Bowers' book of that name [Boston Mills Press].

My son once asked me if I had a favorite train. After several days' thought, I quietly showed him Shaughnessy's August 2, 1957, photo of CN mixed train 329 pulled by 4-6-0 1532, chugging north out of Mildmay, Ont. Moments before, that train would have passed the town of Clifford and my grandmother's house, the only location where I witnessed real steam switching action, perhaps just about when that photo was taken.

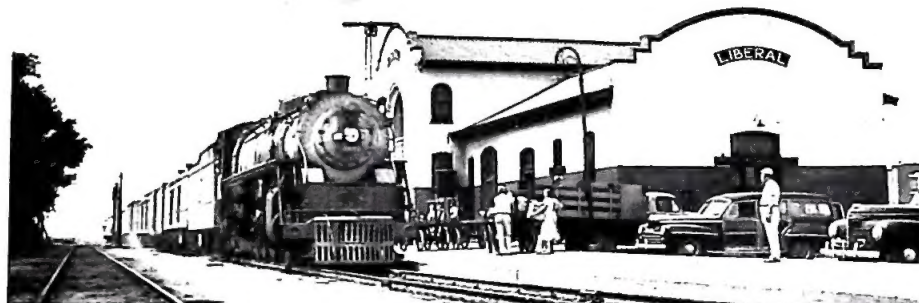
Sherwin Huth
Toronto, Ont., Canada

The "Running in reverse" photo on page 29 is of a Central Vermont 2-8-0 in the 460-475 series, not an 0-8-0 as stated.

J.W. Swanberg
Branford, Conn.

Rock passenger steam ran later

On page 82 in "A Classic Year: 1948," it is stated that Rock Island mainline passenger trains were dieselized in 1948. Not fully, for I took photos that show otherwise, of a steam-powered *Southwest Express* in Liberal, Kans., in July 1949 [above] and leaving Chicago's La Salle Street station with 4-8-2 4040 in March 1951. I also shot 4-8-2 4057 at



BOB MILNER

Englewood, Ill., in August 1951 on either the *Imperial* or *Southwest Express*.

Bob Milner
Arkansas City, Kans.

In his book *Rock Island Motive Power 1933-1995*, Lloyd Stagner says, "steam power on [passenger] trains 43 and 44 [Kansas City-Tucumcari] ended April 1, 1954. . . . Delivery of 30 GP7's and 11 switchers during November and December 1952 had dieselized all regular operations. . . . By October 1, 1953, retirements had reduced steam power to four 4-6-2's, eight 4-8-4's, and nine 0-8-0's . . . the remaining 21 [steam] engines were written off in May 1954." RI's last official use of steam was an oil-burning 0-8-0, I believe the 305, during April 1954, switching in flood-covered tracks in Des Moines, Iowa.

James A. Neubauer
Chicago, Ill.

McGee shared his knowledge

I was extremely pleased by John Gruber's "Warren McGee's Montana" in your "Great Photographers" series [pages 38-47]. I grew up in a Great Northern family in the little northeastern Montana branch-line town of Scobey, where my father was section foreman for years. While a high school student, I worked as a "gandy dancer"; my three brothers also worked for the railroad, and two made a career out of it.

After my Air Force stint, I was a college administrator in Billings, and as part of my job, I was often required to travel, primarily to Seattle. I would take Northern Pacific's *North Coast Limited* as often as I could. On several occasions my wife, daughter, and son would accompany me, and that's when we met

After 1948: RI 4-8-2 4053 steams the *Southwest Express* into Liberal, Kans., on July 31, 1949.

conductor Warren McGee. When he was on board, he would stand in front of the dome, giving us all the benefits of his knowledge of the historical sights we passed. Those were memorable trips.

Charles E. Kittock
Billings, Mont.

IC's 2500's: just as good as the 2600's?

I take strong exception to the "tired" locomotive story [pages 46-47, by Jack Price as told to C. Kevin McCabe]. Illinois Central's 2500 and 2600 series 4-8-2 locomotives were virtually identical in every respect. The only reason the 2600's were built was owing to wartime traffic increases, thus IC could not take 20 more 2-10-2's to turn into 4-8-2's. The 2500's were thoroughly modern with new cast steel engine beds, cylinders, and drivers. They had modern appliances and, in effect, were brand new; they were every bit the equal of the 2600's.

Louis Jaquith
Lexington, Ky.

Intriguing contrast

Compare and contrast the intriguing photo on pages 8-9 ["Photo Line with a Mission"]. On page 8, all men are bare-headed except for the "half person" at the far left; only one seems to be taking pictures; only one appears to be wearing an outdoor jacket; and most aren't looking at "Ole 17" [the Livonia, Avon & Lakeville 2-8-2]. On page 9, all except one—me—are sporting caps; all are taking pictures; all have jackets; and all, of course, are looking at "Ole 17."

Lyell C. Beh
Mississippi State, Miss.

You can't beat the Great Western

In was nice to see more of Ken Crist's fine photography in Dave Ingles' article on the Great Western ["Bringing in the Beets," pages 32-37]. Ken was one of a group of young railfans including Jim Calvert, Ross Grenard, Bob Jensen, Bill Jones, Bill Marvel, Hol Wagner, and me who were passionate about trains and particularly the Great Western Railway.

I didn't discover the GW until 1961, too late to catch 51, 60, or 75 in regular service, but on September 10, 1961, the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club sponsored an excursion that featured a rare Great Western doubleheader. C&S 2-8-0 638 hauled the 6-car train from Denver to Loveland and then out the Arkins Branch and back to Loveland, where GW 2-8-0's 51 and 75 took charge and covered the entire main line, to Eaton and back, then to Longmont, where 638 met the train to return to Denver.

Ronald C. Hill
Denver, Colo.

In October 1960, my wife and I honeymooned in Rocky Mountain National Park. En route home, we stopped in Loveland, Colo., for gas, and immediately heard a steam-locomotive whistle. The gas-station owner said it was the Great Western hauling beets, and he was right—No. 90 was assembling a train of

empties. We followed it to Windsor, and in speaking with the crew, we were told that passengers could ride in the caboose. My wife, Marjorie, was all for it.

At the next station, she climbed happily into the caboose cupola. I photographed the 2-10-0 at speed several times, and also the caboose as it passed, intending to record my loved one waving from the cupola. It was to no avail—her arm in the window was all I could get. As she descended the steps at the next stop, I asked why she didn't wave or look out at me for a photo. "Oh," she said, "I was busy talking to the young brakeman on the other side of the cupola." So much for the thrill of a caboose ride!

Joe Collias
Crestwood, Mo.

Two Michigan 2-4-2's

The identification on page 88 in Louis A. Marre's "Hail, Columbia!" of the little 2-4-2 working in a Michigan gravel pit for Hersey (not "Hershy") Gravel Co. is not correct. The engine was built by Baldwin in 1908 for the Wilzin Co. Ltd. Hersey was using it by the 1930's, along with an 1886 Baldwin 2-6-0 from the Detroit & Mackinac. The Flint & Pere Marquette had long since disappeared into history when the 2-4-2 was built.

Cornelius W. Hauck
Cincinnati, Ohio

Pere Marquette's only 2-4-2, No. 32, pictured on page 19 of Million and Dixon's *Pere Marquette Power* [C&O Historical Society, 1984], was a high-wheel (62-inch drivers) mainline engine built in 1895 for a New Jersey transit line and soon sold to the Saginaw, Tuscola & Huron, a different PM predecessor than the F&PM. PM retired her in 1920.

Alan B. Brown
Melbourne, Fla.

Hudson variety

The picture on pages 48-49 of Canadian National 4-6-4 5704 ["Photo Section"] is a beauty, but CNR had only five of them, not six as the caption says. As a teenage railfan, I would pedal my bike to CN's Sunnyside station in Toronto to watch trains, and if one sat long enough, one could see four styles of 4-6-4's from three railways: CN's 5700's, CP's regular



JOE COLLIAS

My bride was too busy talking to wave, alas.

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By the way, not all of Toronto's ex-Birmingham PCC streetcars ["Car Stop: Changing Times in Birmingham," pages 92-93] went to Philadelphia, as Toronto Transit Commission started to dispose of its "boomer" PCC's before that sale. The Birmingham cars had blue tinted stand-ee windows, and at night when the interior lights were on, they were attractive.

Clayton M. Morgan
Bowmanville, Ont.

Birmingham memories

"Changing Times in Birmingham" brought back memories. I rode those cars to West End and Bessemer, and my father made his living working on them.

Bishop Holliman
Woodburn, Ind.

The pictured car 554 may have been Cincinnati-built, but it's not a curved-side car. This is picky, but history is made by what appears in the printed word.

John P. Wunderle
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio

Riding the Pittsburgh trains

Having grown up in Warren, Ohio (I lived there until 1973), W. L. Gwyer's "The Pittsburgh Train" [pages 54-61] on the Cleveland-Pittsburgh corridor was especially interesting. At one time or another I rode all four lines mentioned from Warren, Niles, or Youngstown to either Cleveland or Pittsburgh and on to New York, Chicago, Detroit, and Washington. It is especially disheartening that so much of that track has been torn up.

The view of the gantlet track looking east on South Street in Warren was especially nostalgic, since that was what I first saw every time I returned from

Cleveland. A head-on collision there of two steam locomotives in summer 1943 resulted in two fatalities.

A slight error on the map: The combined Pennsy-B&O line began a few miles west of Niles, not in Youngstown.

Mitchell W. Ticoras
Thiensville, Wis.

I grew up in Beaver, Pa. The lower photo on page 59 is undoubtedly P&LE 274, the *Morning Steel King*, not No. 24. Gateway Yard opened on May 1, 1958, and by that time P&LE passenger trains had been renumbered into a more NYC-like scheme. Also on page 59, B&O's Pittsburgh station was not relegated to "just a commuter facility." It continued to be served by B&O long-distance trains to Buffalo and Rochester, N.Y., and those going west and south through Wheeling. The last of these was gone by 1956, but with the fall 1961 timetable, the *Daylight*

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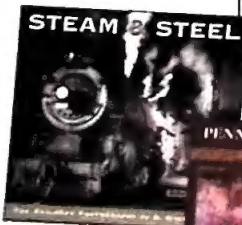


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Speedliners to Baltimore moved from the P&LE station to the "new" B&O facility and remained there until their demise.

Dwight Long
Angola, Del.

Right fantasy, wrong location

Neal R. Fink's article on the proposed 2-10-4's ["Wabash's Phantom N Class," pages 68-73], was most interesting, and his sketches were superior. However, restrictions of excessive weight for the Mississippi River bridge and limited clearances in the tunnel, both at Hannibal, would have kept such a 2-10-4 off the old 10th and 12th Districts, although they might have been allowed on the 2nd District between Peru, Ind., and Tilton, Ill., for Wabash had stiff grades at Clymers, Colburn, West Lebanon, and Newell.

James A. Tilton
Waterloo, Ill.

Trolley follies

I enjoyed Michael McHale's essay on his Philadelphia streetcar adventures in the early 1950's ["Streetcar Sundays," pages 86-90]. We are contemporaries, as I started solo riding on the vast system in 1953 at the tender age of 10, and I experienced the same sights and sounds. However, I noticed some errors in the article.

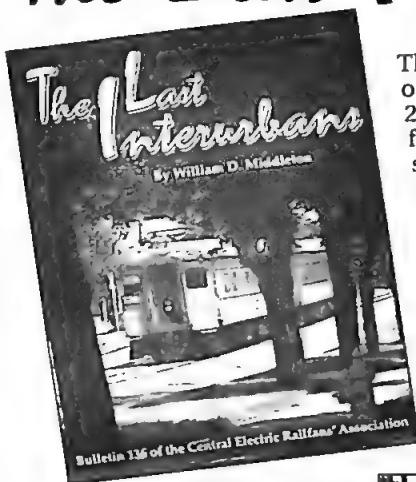
By 1953, Route 20 was served by Nearside cars only on weekdays; on Sundays, modernized 8000-series cars worked the route. It was Route 43, not 33, that ran through the tunnel under the Art Museum, and this route was 100 percent PCC-operated; Route 43 lost its trolleys in 1956, and the tunnel is now a roadway. The "trestle" and tunnel referred to is probably the subway-surface lines bridge over the Schuylkill River and the tunnel in Center City; 8000-series cars used this line. Lastly, a car on Route 56 going from Front Street to Frankford Avenue would be eastbound.

Henry J. Adamcik
Collingdale, Pa. **1**

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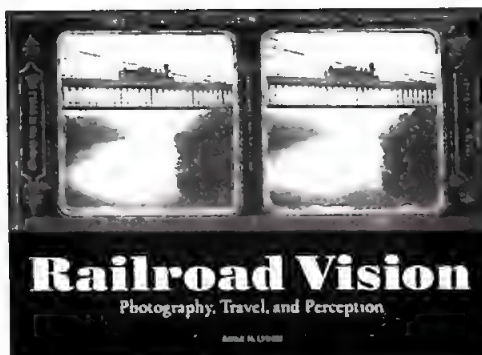
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New England's little gem

Maine Central was small enough to be a community, and it was profitable

PERHAPS IT WAS INEVITABLE that Maine Central, a plucky money-maker in northern New England, would someday become a coveted gem in the merger frenzy of the 1970's and '80's.

Tucked away in a corner of the U.S., MEC quietly went about turning a tidy profit for its stockholders year after year while its larger neighbors became embroiled in merger and bankruptcy proceedings.

By the time I came to the railroad in 1974, Maine Central had become an anachronism. It was small enough to be a community of friends, much like its neighbor to the north, Bangor & Aroostook. While a few of us were from "away," most were born and bred Mainers. We knew the top officials, and they knew us by name. Battling the forces of nature in an often-harsh environment forged a work ethic and created bonds of mutual reliance. It was easy to feel a part of the organization. Twenty-five-year pins were common, and on the day the railroad closed its doors, 50-year pins were still in stock. When 20-year-old Edna Crimmins began with the company in 1918, she had no idea that 65 years later the railroad would have a jeweler fashion a special service pin just

MEC honored the U.S. Bicentennial not with a red-white-and-blue locomotive but with 10 new, and named, "Independence class" GE U18B's.

for her. Upon her retirement in 1985, she was given an engraved silver platter.

Therein lay part of MEC's strength of character, a bond that in today's corporate environment is hard to define, let alone locate. In the company's 121 years as Maine Central, its employees were proud to be a part of it, and in some respects felt it was theirs.

In its prime, with branch lines radiating from terminals large and small, MEC stretched out over 1358 miles between Portland in the south, Bangor and Mattawamkeag in the north, and Vanceboro, Calais, and Eastport in the east. To the west was its most scenic line, through the rolling hills of central Maine with exotically named places like Oquossoc and Passadumkeag and the rugged White Mountains of New Hampshire, to St. Johnsbury, Vt. We called it the "Mountain Division." It was our connection to the west, skirting the Boston & Maine. At one time, MEC's map included a 114-mile route north off the Mountain Sub through North Stratford, N.H., and Beecher Falls, Vt., to Lime Ridge, Quebec, the northern reaches of which dated from the late 1880's.

The system had humble origins, ultimately consolidating 50 small railroads in Maine, New Hampshire, and Ver-

mont, starting with the Calais Railroad in 1832. Maine Central Railroad was formed on October 28, 1862, by consolidating the Androscoggin & Kennebec and the Penobscot & Kennebec, whose lines extended from Danville Junction north to Bangor. These, plus the Kennebec & Portland, would be MEC's main routes. Other roads with names long forgotten, such as Bangor & Piscataquis and Somerset & Kennebec, would join. Together with other lines leased or bought during 1870-1902, the foundation for the modern Maine Central was laid by the turn of the century. One line was the Belfast &

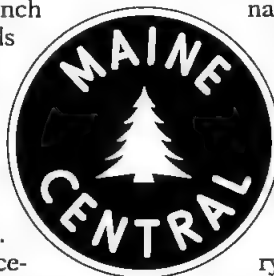
Moosehead Lake, leased from 1871 until 1925; it was turned over to the city of Belfast in 1926 and still runs. Another segment worthy of remark was Mattawamkeag to Vanceboro, which after 1890 formed part of Canadian Pacific's main line from Montreal to Saint John, New Brunswick; MEC sold it to CP in 1974.

Historically, Maine Central served its home state with businesses beyond the railroad. MEC was in the resort business (1911-1941, with the Mount Kineo House and the SamOset), operated coastal steamers and ferries (1882-1931), ran a bus line (1925-1956), and was in a partnership operating an airline (1933-1943).

MEC's modern financial strength, though, was directly tied to the paper industry; wood products and by-products were its lifeblood. When the wood and paper industries did well, so did the railroad. In recessions, MEC coped.

Maine Central's history mirrored the railroad industry as a whole, a legacy characterized by expansion with touches of greed and arrogance, prosperity, success, hard times, retreat, and survival. MEC came under control of the Eastern Railroad in the mid-1870's and through it, control was passed to the Boston & Maine in 1884. B&M continued to influence MEC for 80 years. Requiring its own headquarters, MEC built a stolid edifice in Portland on St. John Street, beginning in 1898.

In 1907, the New Haven bought con-



GENERAL ELECTRIC



PHILIP R. HASTINGS

trol of B&M, and by extension, MEC. This arrangement ended in 1914, but not before MEC and B&M created the Portland Terminal Company in 1911 to facilitate operations in Maine's largest city. That same year the New Haven ordered Portland to take control of 2-foot-gauge lines Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes and (in 1912) Bridgeton & Saco River. When the lumber business in those regions evaporated in the 1920's, MEC, by then independent, sold them.

Hard times during the Depression forced MEC and B&M to agree to share corporate functions, with Boston at the throttle. The arrangement offered the benefits of merger without the legal entanglements, but after World War II, MEC's directors thought their railroad was getting the short end of the stick and the arrangement ended in 1952. Full separation wasn't achieved until 1955, with the election of corporate counsel E. Spencer Miller as president.

By then, MEC mirrored the operation of B&M, right down to the ringing of tinny electric bells in the accounting

Pacific 470 departs Portland Union Station June 13, 1954, with MEC's last steam run; 2000 people would greet her in Waterville, now her home.

departments on the third floor of the general offices that indicated when employees were to begin work, take a coffee break, break for lunch, resume work, etc. Tradition was hard to extinguish; the "bells" practice lasted into the Guilford era. Outwardly, MEC took small steps to distinguish itself from B&M, such as swapping deep green for the maroon on some road diesels while retaining the basic styling, much of it suggested by builders EMD and Alco. Although other units kept their maroon and gold for almost two decades more, MEC had established its own culture.

In steam days, Maine Central's roster was typical for a small road. Most numerous were Ten-Wheelers (67), and perhaps the most glamorous were its two 1930 Baldwin 4-6-4's. MEC owned 32 2-8-2's and some hand-me-down engines from B&M including eight 2-10-2's and even four 2-6-6-2's. MEC

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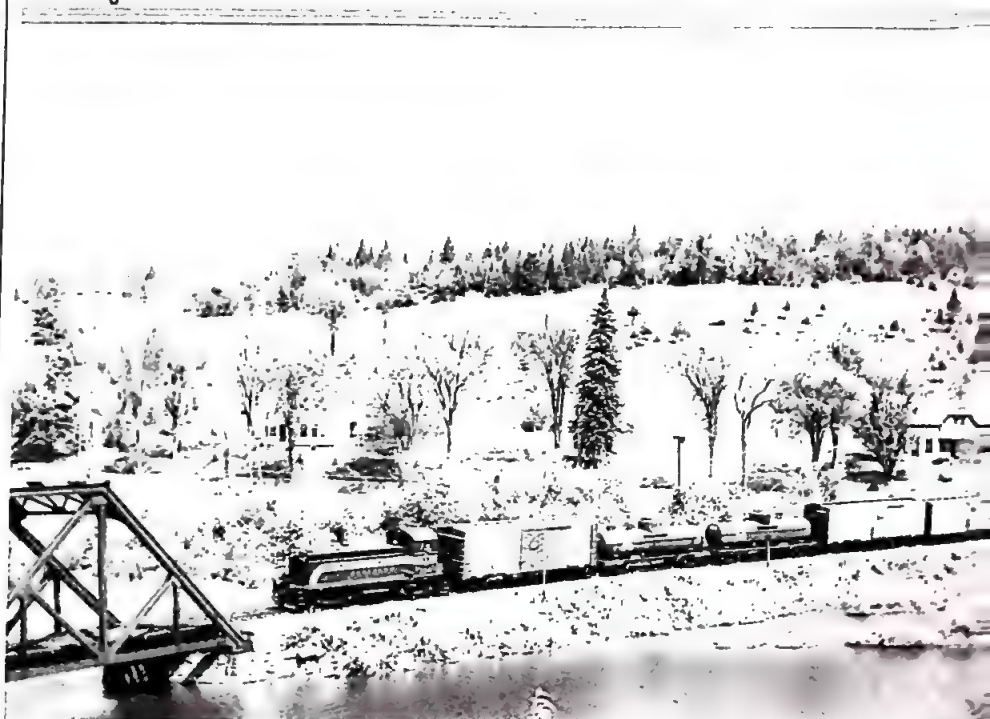
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Fallen Flags Remembered



JIM SHUAUGHNESSY

Just out of Beecher Falls, Vt., MEC's daily mixed to Whitefield, N.H., approaches the Connecticut River bridge behind SW9 334 on May 28, 1955.

June 13, 1954, behind No. 470, the last of MEC's 26 Pacifics, from which MEC's unofficial historical group, a Portland railfan organization, took its name. The 1924 Schenectady 4-6-2 is displayed in the MEC shop town of Waterville.

bought its first yard diesels in 1941, from Alco, and moved quickly after the war by purchasing new RS2's and RS3's, EMD F3's and GP7's, seven E7's for its passenger trains, and two Alco RS11's in 1956. Steam operation ended with a "last run" special in a pouring rain on

Maine Central's modern passenger operation began in 1935 with the purchase by B&M and MEC of the Budd-built, Zephyr-like *Flying Yankee*, today undergoing restoration. In 1947, MEC



Approximate scale: ca. early 1900's; not all lines shown

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bought eight new coaches, two diner-bar counter cars, and two baggage-coach cars, all from Pullman-Standard, in a joint order with B&M.

Deficits from passenger service cut deeply into profits through the 1950's, and passenger service ended in September 1960. The authoritarian Miller made sure there was no going back, selling all the passenger cars, even those just 10 years old, and properties. Depots were razed, even Portland's magnificent Union Station, which rocked the community. One car was sacred, though: MEC 333, the "Three Threes," a 1924 Pullman business car which had Peruvian wood paneling and brass fixtures.

Throughout the 1970's, Miller and Buck Dumaine (of New Haven Railroad and Amoskeag fame) debated merger. Dumaine's Amoskeag Corp. controlled the Bangor & Aroostook, and he wanted to vote Amoskeag's stock interest in MEC to form an alliance or merger. Although MEC was stronger, Dumaine saw himself at the head of such a combination. But he wasn't a match for the Harvard Law-schooled Miller, who repelled Dumaine's advances, postulating that ownership by a conglomerate was not in the interests of any railroad.

Miller seemed to prove his point. Modernizing with new motive power (GP38's in 1966-67) and rolling stock in a bright yellow and green livery, his purchases spoke for themselves—MEC was healthy and didn't need a partner to stay in business. When General Electric delivered 10 U18B "baby U-boats" in 1975, they were christened the "Independence Class," a double entendre,

Nine of MEC's 19 GP7's had dynamic brakes for the "Mountain Division," and 568 (plus F3 681) indeed are at St. Johnsbury, Vt., in August 1964.



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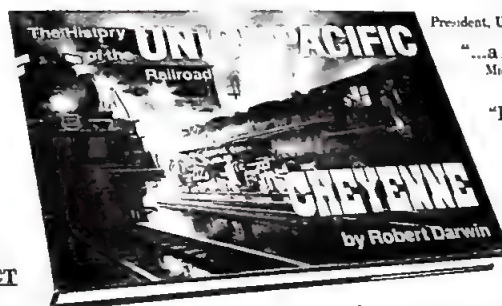
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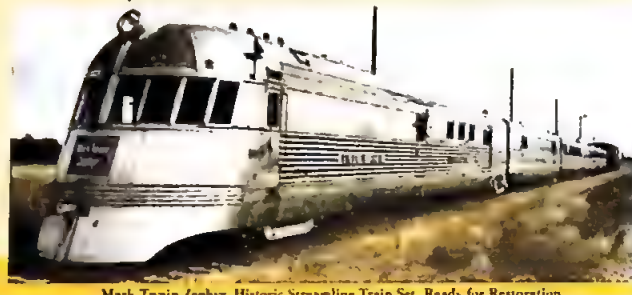
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Fallen Flags Remembered

with each unit given a name in a revolutionary theme in anticipation of the U.S. bicentennial. Seven were named for patriots (Gen. Henry Knox, Hannah Weston, Gen. John Stark, Gen. Peleg Wadsworth, Kenneth Roberts, John Allan, and Ethan Allen); the others were *Arundel* (for a Roberts novel); *Unity* (a warship); and *Battle of Bagaduce*.

We admired our resourceful mechanical forces in Waterville and Bangor as they rebuilt aging GP7's, including four bought from Louisville & Nashville and one from Algoma Central. Their great challenge was MEC's 1980 purchase of 14 Rock Island U25B's, 4 of which were fit only to supply parts.

As the lumbering and paper businesses diminished, though, so did MEC's traffic. Branchline service was reduced, and some lines were abandoned. Friends retired. Employment shrank.

The septuagenarian Miller, easing into retirement but still wanting to keep control, sought to protect MEC from Dumaine. Thinking he might find a buyer who would need to retain him as a guiding figure, Miller selected a small firm that seemed just right: U.S. Filter. It had no rail background, and would need Miller to run it. Maine Central's stockholders approved the sale in 1980.

Within a year, Miller's plan went awry. U.S. Filter was purchased by Ashland Oil, which had no need or desire for a railroad. Ashland went shopping for a buyer, and found one. After its purchase by Timothy Mellon's Guilford Transportation Industries in 1981, the Maine Central slowly and painfully lost its identity . . . and in the process, lost its soul. ■

Maine Central fact file

(comparative figures are for 1929 and 1981)

Route-miles: 1121; 818

Locomotives: 201; 73

Freight cars: 6698; 4523

Passenger cars: 264; 66 (1959)

Headquarters city: Portland, Maine

Notable postwar passenger trains: *Flying Yankee*, *Pine Tree Limited*

Special interest group: The 470 Club Inc., P.O. Box 641, Portland, ME 04104

Source: *The Historical Guide to North American Railroads* (Kalmbach, 1999).

NEW FROM BOSTON MILLS PRESS

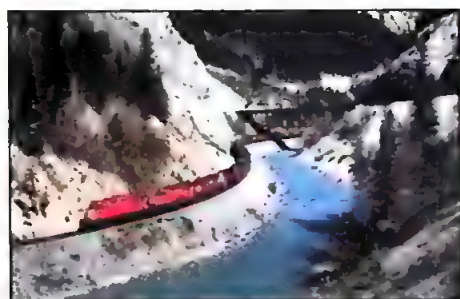
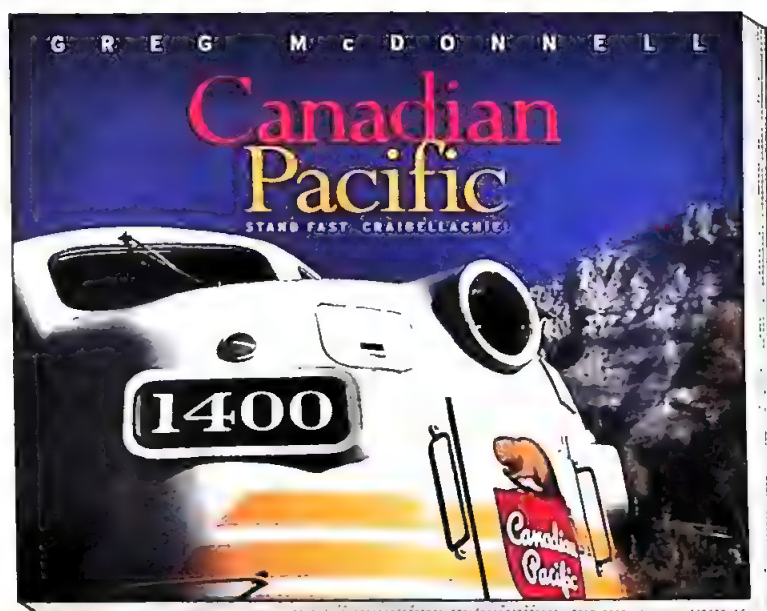
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by Greg McDonnell

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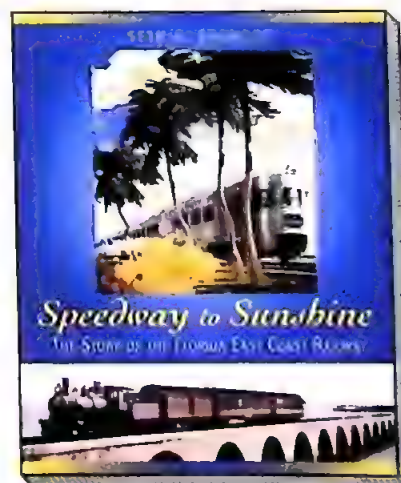


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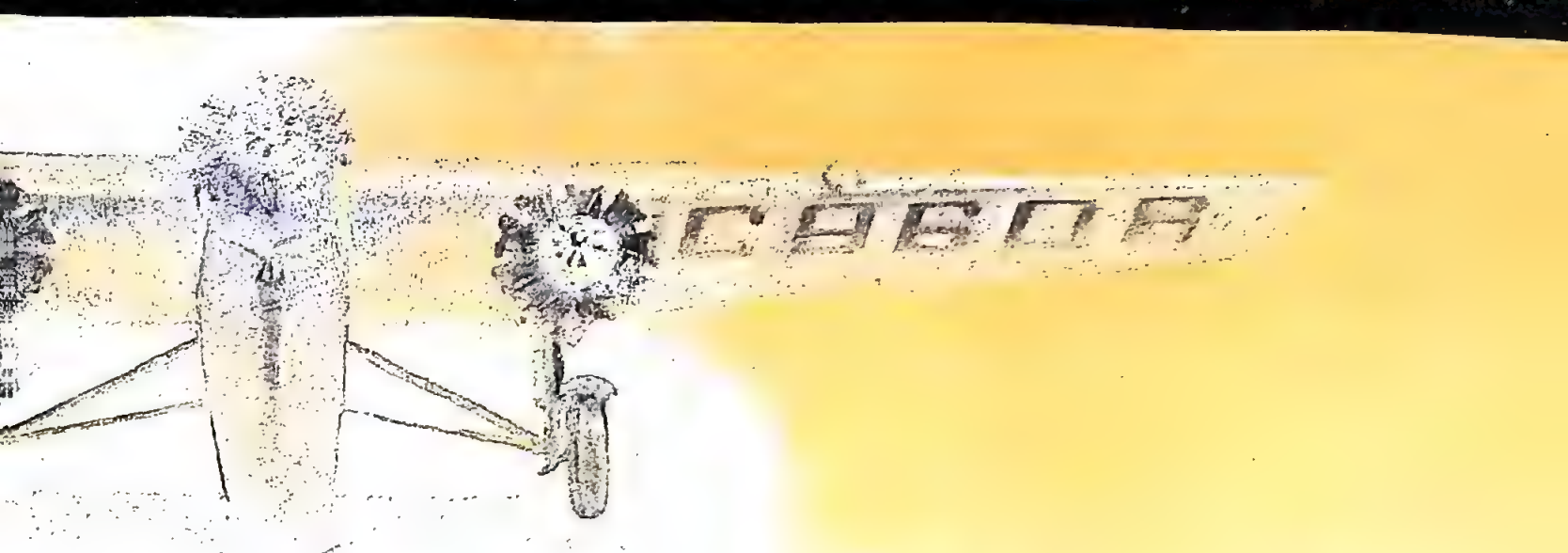
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COAST T





COAST

BY RAIL AND AIR

By Arthur D. Dubin

In 1929, two railroad giants and a fledgling airline created a sensation with record-breaking transcontinental passenger service



The coast-to-coast passengers enjoyed a variety of dining experiences. On the *Airway Limited*, dinner and breakfast were served in PRR dining cars. In-flight luncheons and snacks were furnished by Fred Harvey, famous restaurateur to the Santa Fe. Dinner in the evening at Waynoka and breakfast the following morning at Clovis were served at the Harvey Houses at the two Santa Fe stations.

Transfers between airfields at Waynoka and Clovis and the respective Santa Fe stations, and between Los Angeles' Grand Central Air Terminal in Glendale and downtown L.A.—all short distances of about 5 miles—were on public highways. Passengers rode in specially built "Aerocars"—short, streamlined trailers pulled by high-powered automobiles.

The eastbound Los Angeles-New York schedule and itinerary were similar to the westbound arrangements. On July 8, 1929, for the first flight out of Glendale—before a crowd of 100,000 that included Hollywood movie stars, the mayor of Los Angeles, and the governor of California—Charles Lindbergh himself piloted the lead Ford Tri-Motor to Clovis. After the all-day flight, including dinner at the Albuquerque airport Harvey House, passengers boarded a set-out Pullman at Clovis that was picked up by Santa Fe train 10, the *Scout*, for the overnight trip to Waynoka. The remainder of the trip was the reverse of the westbound: a TAT flight to Port Columbus, then overnight on PRR train 66, the *American* (there was no eastbound *Airway Limited*), with a morning arrival at Penn Station, New York.

The Pennsylvania-TAT-Santa Fe route was not quite the first transcontinental rail-air service. On June 13, 1929—three weeks before the start of the PRR-TAT-ATSF service—

CIRCULAR No. B-02

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

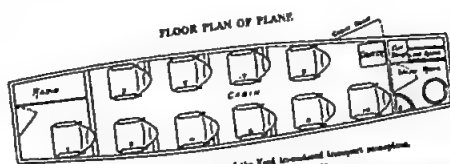
July 1, 1929

To Ticket Agents and Baggage Agents

SUBJECT: Rail-Air Passenger Service between Atlantic Seaboard and California and Intermediate Points.

Effective July 7, from New York by rail, and July 8, 1929, by airplanes from Port Columbus, daily rail-air passenger service will be inaugurated from New York, N.Y., to Los Angeles, Cal., and July 8 eastbound:—

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD... Between New York, N.Y., and Port Columbus, Ohio.
 TRANSCONTINENTAL AIR TRANSPORT, INC. ... Between Port Columbus, Ohio, and Airport, Ohio.
 TAT-SANTA FE RY. ... Between Waynoka, Okla., and Clovis, N.M.
 SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST LINE ... Between Clovis, N.M., and Los Angeles, Cal.

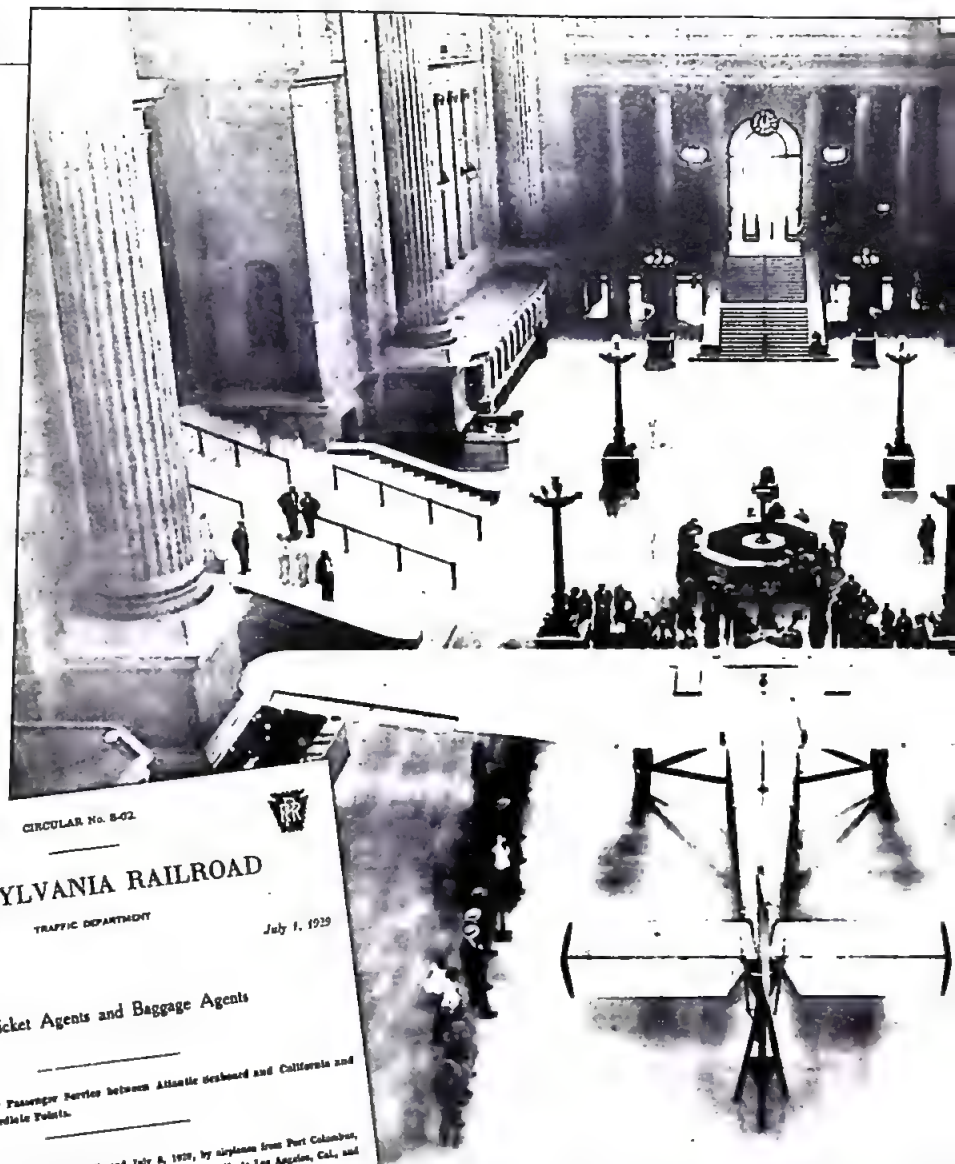


ARTHUR D. DUBIN COLLECTION

the New York Central inaugurated a 67-hour New York-Los Angeles passenger schedule. The routing westbound was NYC's *Southwestern Limited* overnight to Cleveland; cross-town by cab or bus to the airport; Universal Air Lines flight 9, the *Sky-*

liner, with Fokker Tri-Motor aircraft, to Garden City, Kans. (with stops at Chicago and Kansas City); and Santa Fe train 3, the *California Limited*, to Los Angeles. The trip required three nights and four days, one more day than the PRR-TAT-ATSF option.

The Central advertised another New York-L.A. schedule, in a blistering 46 hours, by way of NYC to Chicago, Chicago & Alton or Santa Fe to Kansas City, and Western Air Express to Los Angeles. The many close connections proved unworkable in stormy or winter weather, though, and the route was soon eliminated. But unlike the TAT effort, these arrangements were merely coordinated services, with no financial link between the railroads and airlines.





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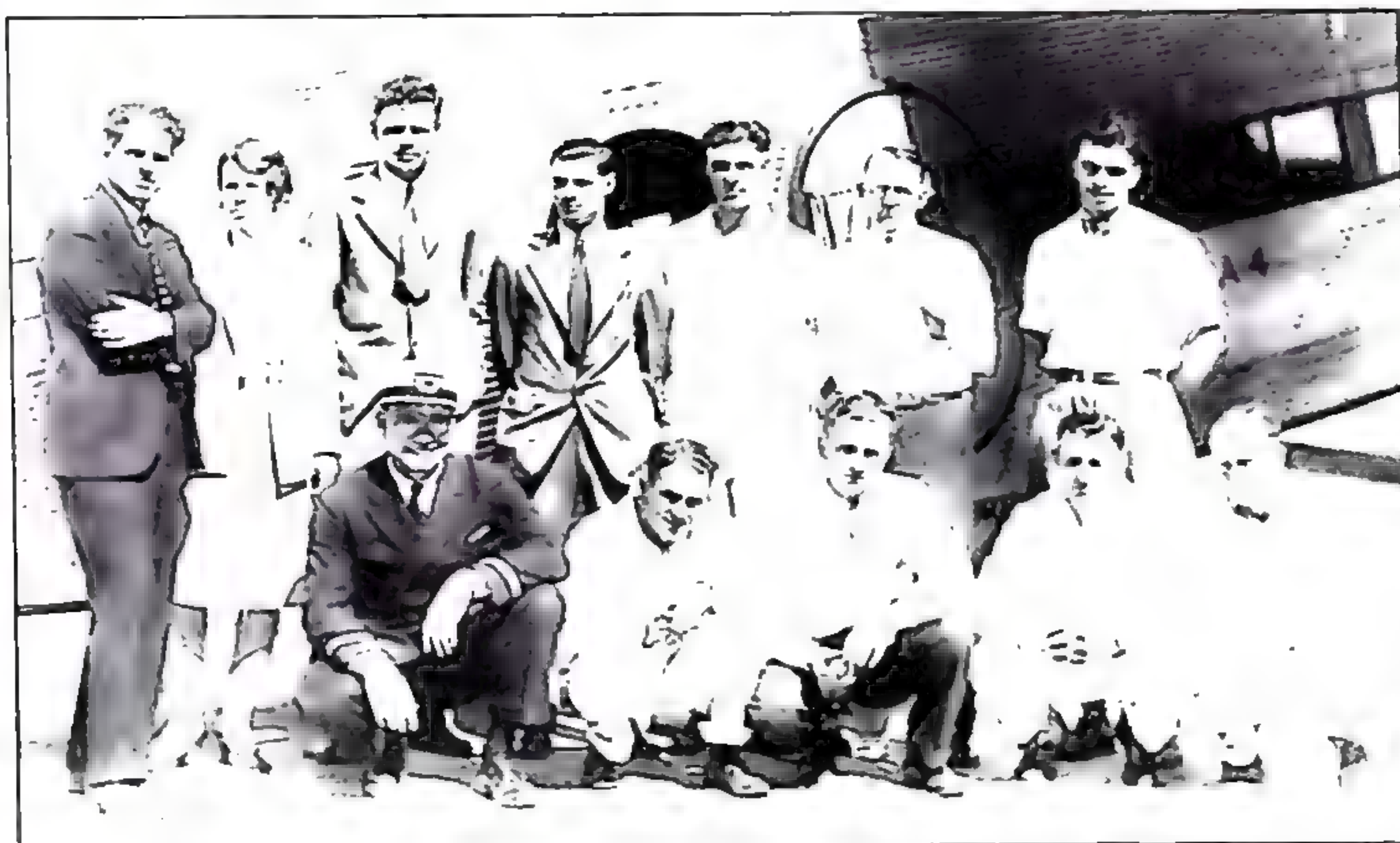
Tri-Motor 9606 made a striking display in the stately halls of Penn Station. Inside the planes (above right), passengers sat on wicker chairs with pillow headrests. Famous flier Charles Lindbergh (right, third from left, standing) poses with TAT personnel early in the program.

RECOGNIZING THE AIRBORNE NEWCOMERS

World War I, which began in Europe only 11 years after the Wright Brothers' pioneering flight of 1903, was a great boon to the development of aviation technology. The 1920's saw increased peacetime use of aircraft, which were becoming bigger, faster, and more reliable. Development of air services in the U.S. attracted the attention of railroad leaders such as NYC President Alfred H.



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WAYNOKA AIR-RAIL MUSEUM COLLECTION

Smith, who wrote about the trend in the *Aircraft Year Book* for 1923:

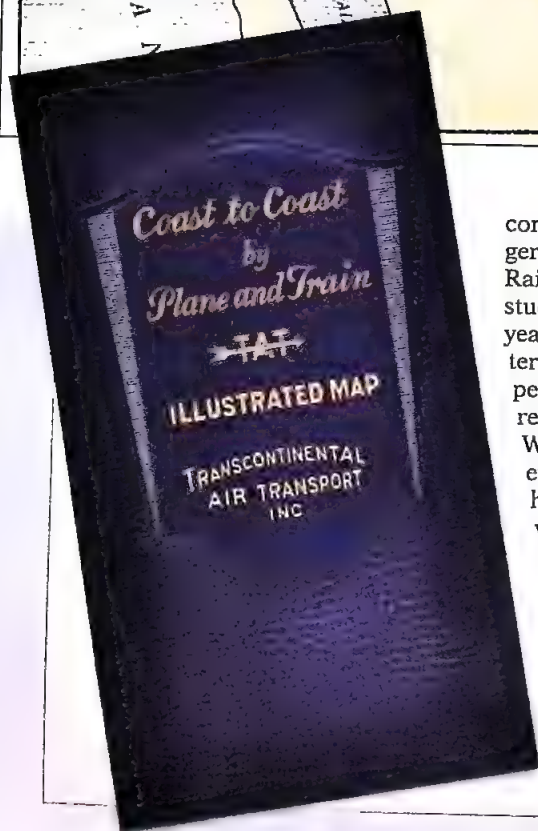
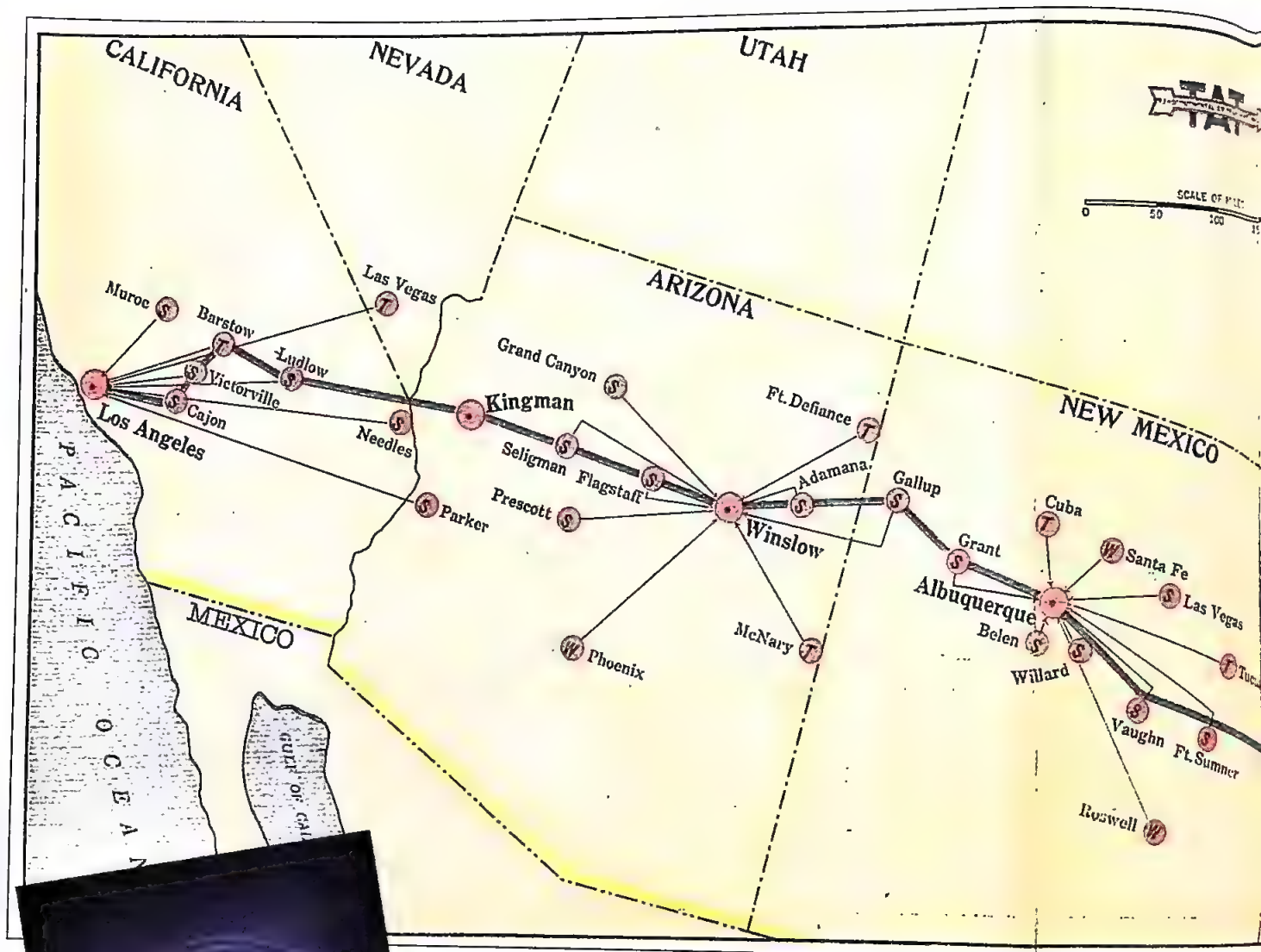
"In traveling on the *Twentieth Century Limited*, which the New York Central believes is the finest train in the world, and observing from the window a seaplane flying up the Hudson at a speed at least half again as fast as the *Century*, or a mail plane bound overland for Chicago, making two miles and a half to the *Century's* one, I cannot close my mind, as did the stage-coach owners in the late [eighteen] thirties, to the fact that here is a new form of transportation which, sooner or later, may become of substantial service for other than war purposes.

"How will commercial aircraft be regarded by the railways? My judg-

ment is that when the railways find that aircraft offer an expeditious high-speed service which can be used to relieve the railways of certain portions of traffic requiring excessive or abnormal speed, then there must naturally develop a mutually advantageous coordination. How long this will require depends upon the demonstration of utility by aircraft."

The first railroad to invest money in air transport was the Pennsylvania, which in 1928 took a substantial interest in the new company Transcontinental Air Transport, Inc. The PRR's entry into the new realm of air travel was explained by its president, Gen. William Wallace Atterbury, in a booklet issued at the time:

"The idea of using airplanes for



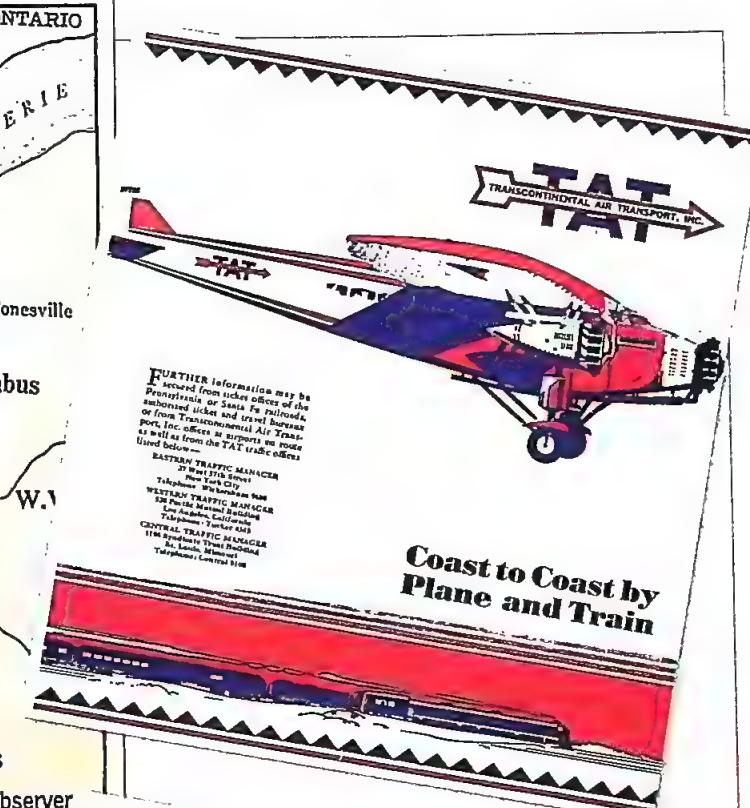
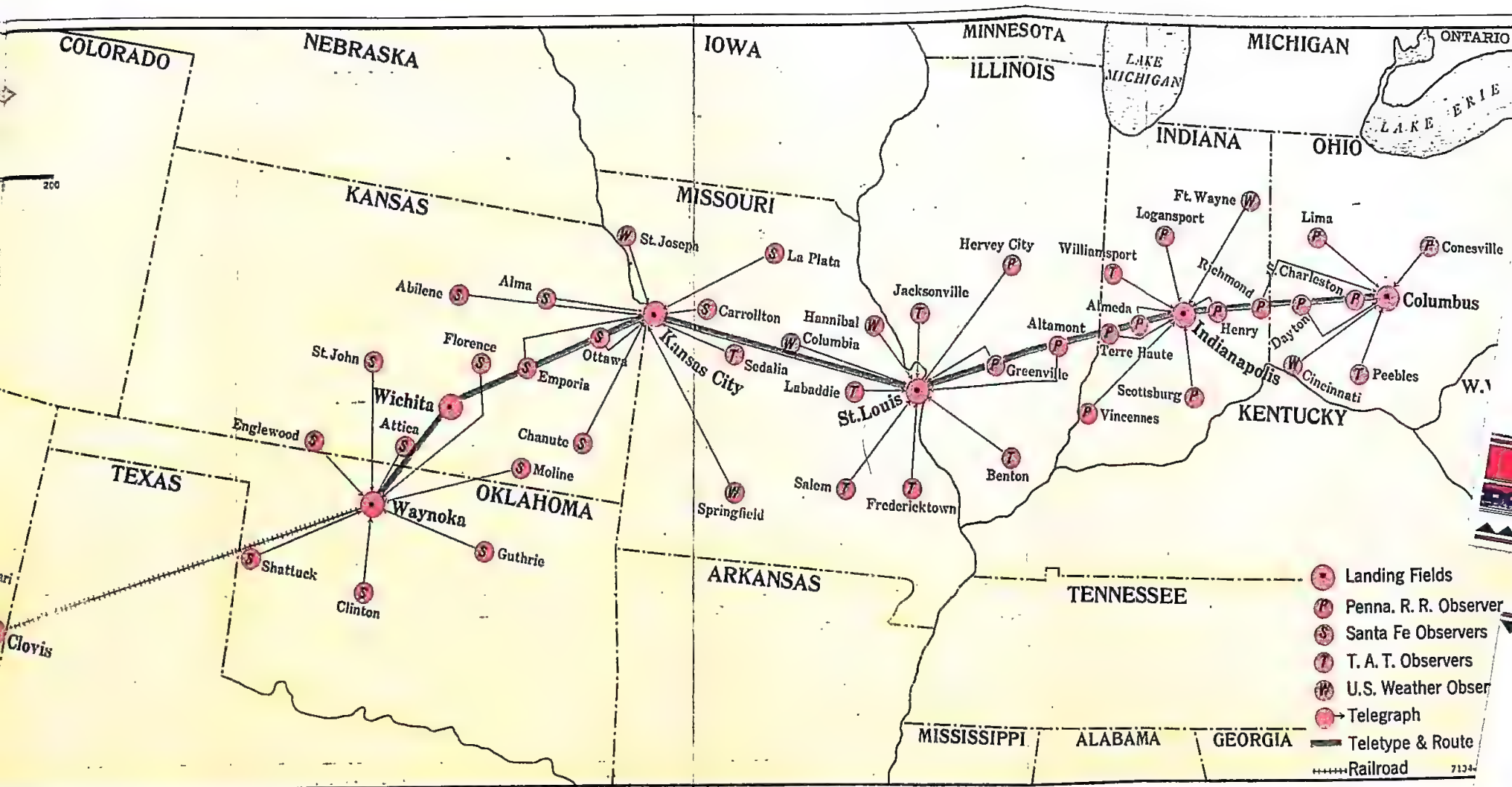
commercial transportation of passengers is not new to the Pennsylvania Railroad management. We have been studying air transport for a number of years, and with particularly close interest and attention in view of the impetus which commercial aviation has received since the close of the World War. During the last five years, several of our best equipped officers have been definitely assigned to watch the progress and development of air transport in America, with a view to the possible use of airplanes in connection with our train operations. . . .

"The idea of operating a joint rail-air service was the natural and logical outcome of our studies in air transportation.

"We wanted to develop a service in which passengers could be regularly and dependably operated in all seasons and under every condition of weather. We wanted nothing experimental or visionary. The combination of the railroad train and airplane, with all night journeys made by the train, seemed to afford the ideal service under present conditions."

1928: A FORMAL ENTERPRISE IS FOUNDED

Transcontinental Air Transport was formed on May 15, 1928, to establish a rail-air system between New York and Los Angeles. TAT was headed by C. M. Keys, president of Curtiss Aeroplane & Motors Co., and Col. Paul Henderson, formerly the Post Office's



SCHEDULES

WESTBOUND		PENN. RAILROAD		EASTBOUND	
"The Airway Limited"		Lv. New York City		Lv. New York City	
8:00 PM	ET	Ar. Port Columbus, Ohio		8:00 AM	ET
7:15 AM	ET	Ar. Port Columbus, Ohio		7:15 PM	ET
TRANS-CONTINENTAL AIR TRANSPORT, INC.		TRANS-CONTINENTAL AIR TRANSPORT, INC.		TRANS-CONTINENTAL AIR TRANSPORT, INC.	
8:15 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		8:15 PM	ET
8:30 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		8:30 PM	ET
8:45 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		8:45 PM	ET
9:00 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		9:00 PM	ET
9:15 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		9:15 PM	ET
9:30 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		9:30 PM	ET
9:45 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		9:45 PM	ET
10:00 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		10:00 PM	ET
10:15 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		10:15 PM	ET
10:30 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		10:30 PM	ET
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11:45 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		11:45 PM	ET
12:00 PM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		12:00 PM	ET
12:15 PM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		12:15 PM	ET
12:30 PM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		12:30 PM	ET
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5:15 PM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		5:15 PM	ET
5:30 PM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		5:30 PM	ET
5:45 PM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		5:45 PM	ET
6:00 PM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		6:00 PM	ET
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12:00 AM	ET	Lv. Port Columbus, Ohio		12:00 AM	ET

chief of air mail. TAT's first board of directors included Keys and Henderson, as well as two top PRR men: Vice President of Traffic Julien L. Eysman and Chief of Passenger Traffic Daniel M. Schaeffer. Other members of the 21-man board included Fred Harvey, "representing hotels and restaurants of the Santa Fe," William B. Mayo, chief engineer of Ford Motor Co. (manufacturer of TAT's aircraft fleet), and William H. Vanderbilt, listed as "Capitalist, New York." The new enterprise was capitalized at \$5 million. Though its trains were integral to the service, the Santa Fe did not have a financial stake in TAT.

One of the TAT board's first actions was to form a technical com-

mittee, chaired by Lindbergh. (He also served as consulting aeronautical engineer to the PRR.) Trading on the aviator's enormous fame, TAT soon began calling itself "The Lindbergh Line." The committee proceeded to determine the route, select the type aircraft to be used, form a Weather Bureau with observers, develop the infrastructure including landing fields and rail-air interchange points, and arrange for the selection and training of pilots and other personnel.

On September 1, 1928—10 months before they launched New York-L.A. service—TAT and PRR started the nation's first regular physically coordinated rail-air service in conjunction with Northwest

Airways and three Western roads: Great Northern, Northern Pacific, and the Milwaukee Road. The service was later extended to include PRR's fellow Eastern trunk lines NYC and Baltimore & Ohio. Northwest Airways scheduled flights between Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul, which Northwest called "air jumps," of 3 hours 30 minutes (compared with 12 hours by rail). By flying between Chicago and the Twin Cities, passengers could save a day as they crossed the continent.

There were other developments during 1928. Universal Aviation Corporation, parent of Universal Air Lines, was formed by aviation and banking interests in St. Louis, Chicago, and the East. Anthony

TAT passengers received hard-cover 4 1/2 x 7 1/2 in. booklets. Foldout maps inside showed (above, 7 1/2 x 32 in.) locations of landing fields and observers along the air legs of the route and (following pages) features of interest. Note the mislabeling of Wisconsin on the map above.

Fokker, the Dutch aeronautical engines and aircraft builder, served as a director of the new corporation. Universal and the Illinois Central Railroad offered a joint service between Chicago and St. Louis, one way by rail, the other by air. Universal also had a major, if "unofficial," arrangement with New York Central to link flights with trains at Cleveland. The term "unofficial" was used because the NYC had no financial investment in the airline.

ALL ITEMS THESE PAGES: ARTHUR D. DUBIN COLLECTION

The main element of TAT's blue-covered passenger booklet was this remarkable 15 x 32-in. map showing the entire transcontinental route, complete with mileages, elevations, and depictions of attractions.

1929: A GLORIOUS BUT BRIEF ZENITH

The rail-air concept reached its zenith in 1929. Contracts were awarded and completed for infrastructure and aircraft. Personnel were hired and trained. Before the year was out, there were four cross-county routes in service:

1. **New York Central-Universal Air Express-Santa Fe:** 67 hours, New York-Los Angeles; first trip June 13, 1929 (NYC New York-Cleveland, UAE Cleveland-Garden City, Kans., ATSF Garden City-L.A.)
2. **PRR-TAT-ATSF:** 48 hours, New York-Los Angeles; first trip July 7, 1929.
3. **NYC-Chicago & Alton or Santa Fe-Western Air Express:** 46 hours, New York-Los Angeles; first trip September 1, 1929. (NYC New York-Chicago, C&A or ATSF Chicago-Kansas City, WAE K.C.-L.A.)
4. **NYC-Southwest Air Express-Texas & Pacific-Standard Air Lines:** About 67 hours, New York-L.A.; first run August 4, 1929. (This complex, and perhaps unreliable, arrangement routed passengers via St. Louis; Sweetwater, Texas; and El Paso—a trek for the hardy traveler, indeed!)

The PRR-TAT-ATSF operation was by far the most ambitious and reliable. Prior to its launch, trade magazines *Airway Age* and *Railway Age* published statements from the principal officers of the participating companies.

TAT President Keys described the history of his young airline. He stated that "with the success of Col. Charles Lindbergh's flight to Paris, and the public enthusiasm aroused, it was felt the time was ripe to launch the plan."

PRR's Atterbury observed, "It seems to me that today the term





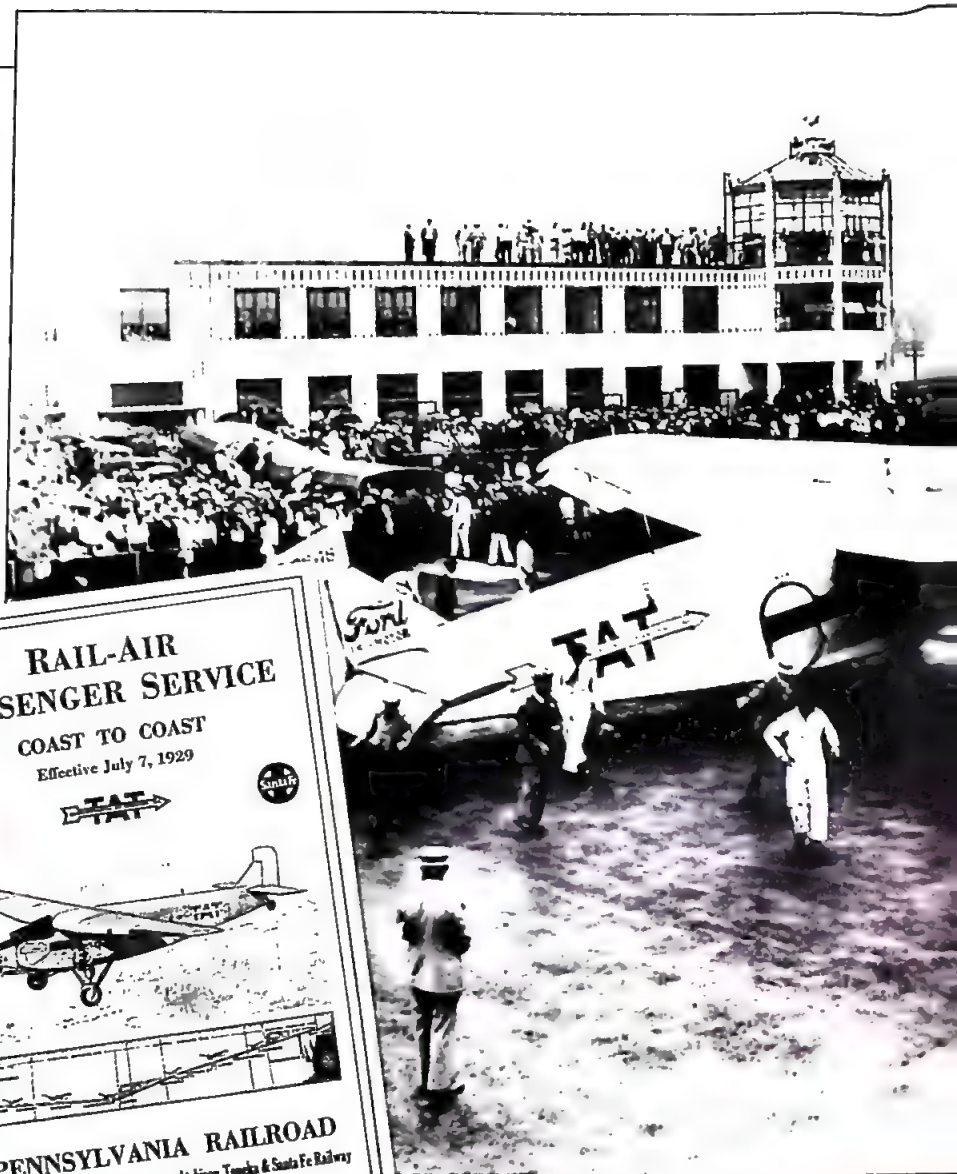
'railroad' does not adequately describe the scope of transportation service that the railroads render. Railroad operations now include the airplane, the motor bus, and the motor truck. We are prepared to offer the traveling public the kind of service best adapted to its needs. . . .

"The railroads will remain, of course, the backbone of the nation's transportation system. We recognize, however, that we can co-ordinate these other forms of transportation into the railroad service as a whole. In this way, also, the Pennsylvania Railroad guarantees to its traveling public the maintenance of the high standards that govern the operation of Pennsylvania trains."

Finally, Santa Fe President W. B. Storey commented that, although his road had not taken a financial interest in the operation, it had "extended its co-operation to the new line." His statement continued:

"Expedited transportation of passengers by airplane is an accomplished fact. Riding in the air has come to stay. As yet the possibilities of this new service are not fully developed. Great speed already is assured, with attendant saving of time. Such comforts as a somewhat limited space permits are provided. . . .

"Notwithstanding the competition that may develop later, we of the railroads are not worried. In fact, we are working in co-operation with the big air transport companies. Because air travel by night is as yet unsatisfactory, it has been found desirable to offer the public a combination train-plane trip for long distances, using the air by day and steel rails by night. . . . Our part in the transaction consists in taking any business offered. While we might prefer to carry travelers 'Santa Fe All



ARTHUR D. DUBIN COLLECTION

the Way,' we are glad to carry them for shorter distances, wherever they take our rails, and whether they get off an airplane or motor car to do so."

NEW AIRLINES, SERVICES, AND SUPPORT SPELL THE END

Within a little more than a year after its launch amid great fanfare, however, the PRR-TAT-ATSF rail-air service had all but ended. On October 25, 1930, TAT and California-based Western Air Express were merged, with the merged company named Transcontinental & Western Air Line, Inc.

On the day of the merger, a TWA

Ford Tri-Motor flew the first all-air passenger service from coast to coast. Even with an overnight stop in Kansas City, the trip took just 36 hours. With that flight, the PRR-TAT-ATSF transcontinental service ended.

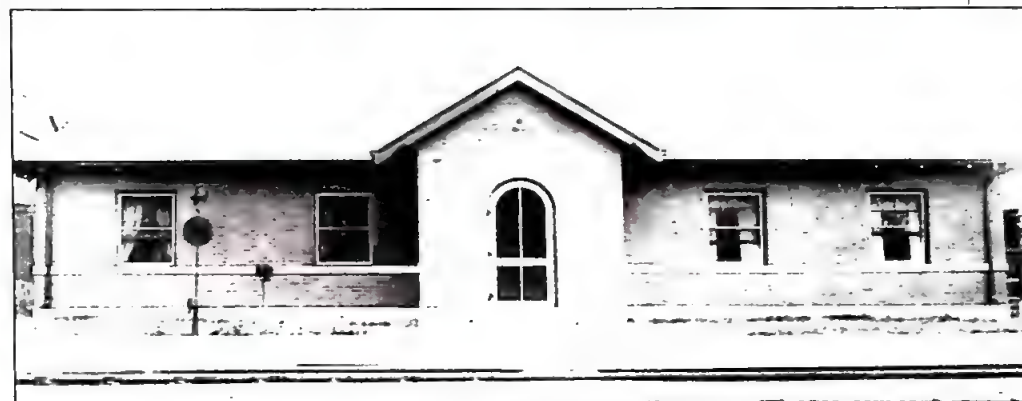
Though it was an important step in the evolution of cross-country travel, the bold venture was not a financial success. The clamor for space on the inaugural flights was followed by relatively weak ridership. Business improved somewhat during the summer of 1929, but dropped following the stock market crash in October. Fare reductions boosted patronage again, but the venture never approached profitability. Flights were often cancelled because of weather

More on our website

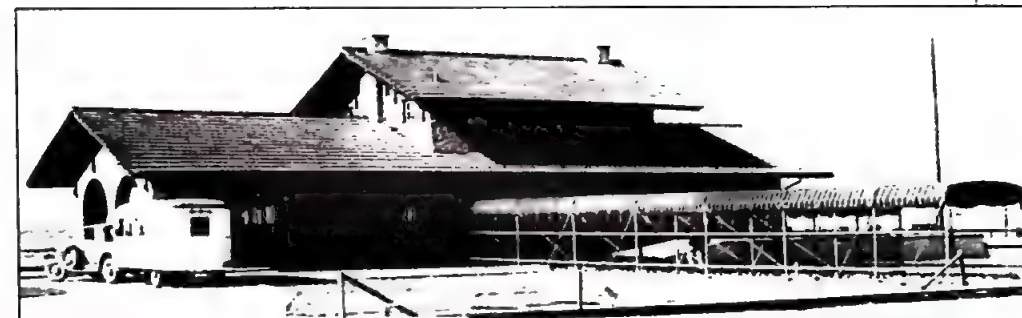
For more on the remarkable Pennsylvania-TAT-Santa Fe rail and air transcontinental service, visit our website, www.classictrainsmag.com



CHUCK BLARDONE COLLECTION



TWO PHOTOS, WAYNOKA AIR-RAIL MUSEUM COLLECTION



CHUCK BLARDONE COLLECTION

At Port Columbus (above), crowds watch Tri-Motors getting ready to head west with the first transcontinental passengers; PRR tracks are in the distance. TAT facilities at Waynoka included a hangar at the airstrip (top right) and a special depot for rail-air passengers (middle right) near the ATSF station. An Aerocar stands outside the station at "Portair" (Clovis), N.Mex.

conditions, particularly in winter.

PRR's *Airway Limited* labored on for two more years between New York and Port Columbus, connecting with a TWA flight to Kansas City and an overnight hotel stop. The following morning a TWA flight completed the 48-hour trip to Los Angeles.

During the last two years of the *Airway Limited*, New York Central

continued operation of its *Southwestern Limited* in coordination with flights at Cleveland airport via "new Direct Train-Plane Connections" at its Linndale station. This was 6 miles west of Cleveland Union Terminal, but conveniently close to the airport.

American Airways in 1930 became the operating entity for a number of airlines, including Universal, which continued its rail-air service to Los Angeles with the NYC. United Air Lines, organized in early 1931, offered—with subsidiaries Boeing Air Transport, National Air Transport, and others—rail-air connections with NYC at Cleveland and Chicago for service to L.A. and San Francisco.

In 1933, the Boeing 247 and the

Douglas DC-1 began flying. Superior to the tri-motor designs, these aircraft, plus the introduction of two-way radio, lighted airports, radio range beacons, advance weather reports, and instrument flying, made air travel safer and faster. With these advances, night flying became practical as well. The death-knell of rail-air had sounded.

By 1935, TWA, United, and American were all flying coast to coast in record times. PRR trains no longer stopped at Port Columbus. In May, W. W. Atterbury, facing illness retired; he died on September 10. The Pennsylvania Railroad sold its TWA stock, and an extraordinary, if brief, transportation era ended. ■



Did you plan to mail me the orders?'

A rookie operator stumbles through his first night at Erie's BJ tower

By Gary Collins

WHEN I WAS A SMALL BOY, the lure of the trains led me to numerous adventures that only left me wanting more. As I grew up, I rode the trains every chance I got, often with my father's movie camera. I recall vividly, and fondly, how my "adventure" began for real—soon I would become a lifelong railroader.

In 1953 I was 17, in my junior year of high school in northern New Jersey, and working at the local Acme Supermarket after school. Many of our customers were railroad workers whom I already knew, and I took every opportunity I could to talk to them about the trains and their jobs. One who appreciated my "thirst" happened to be a supervisor with the Erie Railroad, and he asked if I would like a job. My heart soared!

I was indeed offered a job to train as a tower operator, after which, when I turned 18 (the minimum age to actually work on the railroad), I would assume a regular position. All my qualifying was to be done on "second trick" (the 3 p.m.-to-11 p.m. shift) after school, so my railroad education wouldn't interfere with my high-school education.

The Erie figured if you could operate the towers during the commuter rush, you could operate them on any trick. This meant that as a tower operator trainee, I would be sent to all 15 or so towers on the New York Division. When I was qualified at each one, the on-duty operator would sign my slip, and I would move on to the next tower. For each 8-hour qualifying trick, I was paid the incredible sum of \$10—a substantial increase over the 85 cents an hour I was making at the supermarket.

My first qualifying trick was at SF, in Suffern, N.Y., affectionately known as the "Leaning Tower of Suffern" because it had a noticeable tilt. I reported promptly at 3 p.m. and watched the operator work through the switching routine for a while, and then I participated in the effort, under his supervision. Shortly before 6 p.m., after the commuter rush was over and he felt I'd learned all there was to know, to my astonishment he signed my time slip for the entire 8 hours and suggested I return tomorrow for additional training.

It was his professional judgment that it would be a waste of time for me to stay beyond the commuter rush. What he was really saying, I would find out, is that he did

not want a 17-year-old kid hanging around for a full 8 hours disturbing his solitude with a lot of questions. I subsequently discovered that all the operators had essentially the same point of view. As a result, I was home every night for dinner and in essence was earning over \$3 an hour.

My parents were not particularly fond of my intended endeavor, nor was my high-school guidance teacher. My father's opinion was that I was getting too much money for doing so little, and he promptly termed me a "featherbedder." He was not a proponent of unions but was placated a bit when I told him I didn't have to join . . . right then.

APRIL 1954 BROUGHT MY 18TH BIRTHDAY and the completion of my training. Although I was still in my senior year of high school, I was placed on the seniority list as a regular operator and joined the Order of Railroad Telegraphers (even though, ironically, I didn't even know how to send an SOS). The job paid two to three times as much as the supermarket did, and I was now, according to my father, a "full-time featherbedder." His desire for me to go on to college was set aside, and I entered my career with enthusiasm. (In the ensuing years, I would work as a "boomer" for nine railroads, from coast to coast, as a brakeman, switchman, fireman, and operator while completing my father's dream of a college education, and I then would go on into railroad management . . . but that's another story.)

On my 18th birthday I was placed on the extra board and immediately drew second trick at WC tower in Waldwick, N.J. WC was an uncomplicated job, and at 11 p.m., I went home confident that the knowledge gained in my training had paid off and that I had made no mistakes.

The following day, I was called for third trick at BJ in Rutherford. The interlocking there was not complex, and it saw few trains between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. BJ's interlocking was at an intersection where the four tracks from Jersey City split, two to the Bergen County Line and two to the Main Line through Paterson. A little before 11, I walked up the stairs, greeted the second-trick operator with the usual jargon, and signed the OS (train reporting) sheet. As he was going down the stairs, he casually remarked, "You'll probably run 7 around tonight" . . . and he immediately was gone.

Around what? I asked myself as I stood at the top of the stairs watching his back disappear into the night. Surely they weren't going to run a Chicago passenger train around in circles! I felt my heart start to pound a little faster. Well, whatever he meant, I knew I would find out sooner or later. I

In BJ Tower at Rutherford, N.J.—the same edifice in which the author was "baptized by fire" five years earlier—photographer/operator J.J. "Jack" Emerick Jr. posed for this self-portrait in March 1959, also on second trick.



decided to calm myself with the routine and sat down to listen to the dispatcher's wire. The operator at WJ, Ridgewood Junction, came on.

"WJ."

"WJ," answered the dispatcher.

"What are you going to do with 7?"

"Run him around—101 and 829."

I sat there, dumfounded.

Here I was, an 18-year-old kid who'd been in training for months, now on my second night, and I didn't have the slightest idea what "the DS" was talking about. Not wanting to appear unqualified—in other words, stupid—I wasn't about to ask, either. As I sat at the desk waiting and wondering, I glanced up at the clipboard holding expired train orders, and suddenly the answer to my dilemma was staring me right in the face! There on the order sheet from the previous night was a train order No. 101 allowing train No. 7 to use the eastward track against the current of traffic from BJ to WJ with engine 831.

All in a rush, it became perfectly clear to me. They were obviously going to do the same thing tonight, only with a different engine number. I was elated. The dispatcher had been telling the operator at WJ what to expect, and with train 7 due within the hour, I knew I could expect the dispatcher's phone to ring shortly with a train order for me to copy.

During my qualifying time, none of the second-trick operators had mentioned train orders, probably because on their shift, orders were rarely, if ever, used. I had read about train orders in the rulebook and found them sort of interesting, but I had absolutely no practical experience with them. As I sat racking my brain to remember what I had read and what I needed to do, my thoughts were confirmed by the fact that a through freight was picking up and setting out cars on the westward track. They were going to run No. 7 "around" him on the eastward track.

Now that I knew what I was supposed to do, the adrenaline started flowing and I went to work. I pulled down the blank train-order forms, inserted two carbons, and copied the order from yesterday, changing only the date and the engine number. After checking the order, I knew I was ready and sat back to wait for the all-important call.

SURE ENOUGH, A SHORT TIME LATER AS I listened to the dispatcher's wire, the *clickety-clack* started and another tower operator came on line.

"WJ," was the answer.

A moment later, more *clickety-clack* and my phone rang.

"BJ," I answered.

"WJ, 31 order number 101 to the operator at Ridgewood Junction" . . . "BJ, 19 order number 101 to C&E number 7 at Rutherford Junction."

"WJ, ready"; "BJ ready," we each responded.

"WJ, last East?"

"98 with the 1336," came the reply.

"BJ?"

"98 with the 1336," I responded.

"All right, OK."

"Number 7, engine 829, has right over opposing trains on eastward track Rutherford Junction to Ridgewood Junction." Each word was spoken and then spelled out to make sure there were no mistakes. N-u-m-b-e-r 7 s-e-v-e-n e-n-g-i-n-e 829 e-i-g-h-t t-w-o n-i-n-e, etc. After it was dictated,

Typical of Erie towers was WC at Waldwick, N.J., where author Collins worked his first shift. In March 1959, a unique F3 set rolled a freight past WC—Erie 714-ABCD was built as Ontario & Western A-B duos 821-822-AB.

WJ read it back, again spelling out each word and number, and then I repeated it all in the same manner.

"All right, OK, complete at 12:25, HAB," which were the division superintendent's initials.

I felt elated and greatly relieved. With absolutely no previous experience, I had done my job perfectly. Then I felt a twinge of annoyance. I had received no words of praise from the dispatcher for performing such an excellent job. Surely he must have known I was new on the job.

As I sat basking in the glow of self-praise for accomplishing my job, I suddenly jumped to my feet with the realization that all I'd done was copy the order—I still had to deliver it to the train! Moreover, I was aware of the importance of train 7. It was the *Pacific Express*, bound for Chicago with a dozen head-end cars of mail and express, trailed by a few coaches and at least one Pullman. There were to be no delays to this train; the orders had to be delivered "on the fly."

MY ONLY EXPERIENCE with "on-the-fly delivery" was from reading train magazines as a kid and remembering the pictures. I quickly looked around the tower and saw two poles hanging back in the corner—one set of orders went to the engine crew, the other to the conductor at the rear of the train. I found the string I needed and tied the orders I'd filled out. I had no trouble getting them inserted into the "V" shape at the end of each pole . . . I thought. My next challenge was to figure out the correct height and distance from the train I would need to hold the poles so the fireman could easily reach it while he leaned out the window of the engine. I knew it had to be just so high and close enough to the engine but not so close that it would bounce off the side. I closed my eyes and tried to visualize the pictures I'd seen in the magazines and the right position. Not good enough—I knew I needed to practice.

Glancing at the clock, I saw that 7 wasn't due for another 25 minutes. Plenty of time. I grabbed one of the poles and headed down the stairs. As I stood next to the nearest track inching the pole up and down, and sideways, in an attempt to line it up perfectly with the imaginary locomotive that was bearing down on me, I became aware of some factory workers along the street. Shift change was nearly over, but the few stragglers were watching me with great interest.

What was this kid doing waving a pole around on the tracks, in the middle of the night? Vanity ended my practice, and I headed back upstairs. The next step was to light my red lantern and set it on the porch to signal the train that I had orders for him. Having completed this task, I sat down to wait and tried to be calm. Twenty minutes or so passed before a sudden *ping* made me jump—No. 7 had hit the approach circuit several miles to the east.

I grabbed my two poles and raced down the stairs. I wanted plenty of time to be on the ground and in the right position. But I no sooner reached the bottom landing when I realized that, in my eagerness to deliver the train orders, I had previously lined up the route through the crossovers but had neglected to give him the home signal. "Panic" seems a mild word to describe my feeling as I raced back up the stairs, poles in hand, to set the signal to "restricting." All would have been well had I not tried to get through the door with the poles . . . sideways!

I crashed into the door frame with such force that one of the train orders came loose from the pole and floated to the ground below me. I dropped the poles and raced back down the stairs to retrieve the fallen orders. I made another fast trip back up the stairs to retie the orders to the poles that I should have left downstairs in the first place. Finally, poles in



hand, I literally fell down the stairs and headed to the track.

I imagined all sorts of things. I just knew that No. 7 was going to reach the interlocking a minute or two after he hit the approach circuit, when in reality he was still several miles away. I still had time. Then suddenly, I froze. In all the confusion and trips up and down the stairs to get the orders and poles, I had forgotten to set the home signal—it was still red! Back up the stairs I raced, this time leaving the poles beside the track. A quick pull of the home-signal lever, coupled with an almost a free fall back to ground level, and I was in the proper position at last . . . and No. 7 was still more than a mile away. All was well.

As I stood in the beam of the E8's bright headlight, I was in the middle of the interlocking lining up the pole so the fireman could easily reach the orders. As the train was still a few hundred yards from the home signal, the headlight dimmed, and two short blasts on the air horn told me that 7's engineer was aware he had orders to pick up. Everything was going perfectly. The train was approaching at about 25 mph, when suddenly the headlight flashed several times from bright to dim and back, accompanied by a series of "panic toots" on the air horn.

As I stood my ground alongside the No. 2 main track, with the pole in the air, I wanted to believe this was just a further acknowledgement from the engineer that he had orders to pick up. In my heart, though, I knew better. As these thoughts were racing through my mind and the locomotive was bearing down on me, now only 50 yards away, the engine headlight suddenly swerved. Just as the light swerved, I realized that in my eagerness to finally be in position to line up perfectly to hand up the orders, I had forgotten that I'd crossed him over. I was standing next to the wrong track!

I was a full track-width away from the outstretched arm of the fireman. Only an octopus was going to reach these orders. The race between No. 7 rolling through the crossover and me jumping over the track was on. I made it with only a second to spare, frantically waving the pole in the air in an attempt to line it up for the fireman. Either he was a retired basketball star and knew his stuff, or possibly I did it right. To this day, I don't know which, but I felt a slight tug on the pole and watched as the fireman's arm disappeared inside the engine-cab window, the precious orders along with it.

IMMEDIATELY, ELATION SET IN; the hard part was over. I had done a masterful job my first time out. Or so I thought. All I had to do now was to line up the "V" alongside the passenger cars so the conductor could simply reach out and allow the orders to "fall into his arms." I calmed myself as the dozen or so head-end cars rolled by at 15 mph, and moved the second pole to a horizontal position, within an inch or so from the side of the cars. I remember thinking to myself that even if the conductor was a midget, he wouldn't have any trouble reaching these orders.

As the train rolled by, I saw the approaching conductor's lamp sticking out the door of the last Pullman. *This was going to be perfect*, I said to myself as I pictured his lamp going perfectly through the center of the "V." Suddenly, though, I felt a slight tug on the pole, not unlike the one a few seconds earlier when the fireman got his orders. I looked up, and my orders were gone!

I spun around looking toward the engines and quickly saw my orders—they were hanging on the mail-catcher arm

of the Railway Post Office car! Even though the arm was down to its normal position against the side of the car, I had been standing too close to the train and the arm had hooked it. Paralyzed with fear, I stood there for the next six cars or so, still holding the pole alongside the train, not believing what had just happened. I remember hoping that the orders would magically jump back on the string and then onto my pole, but what did happen is that a few seconds later, the conductor's arm and lamp passed through the center of the "V," and as the last vestibule went west, a puzzled face framed by the rear diaphragm yelled, "Where are they?"

"On the RPO car," I yelled back.

"Did you plan to mail 'em to me?" came his quick reply, and he was gone.

I felt awful. This was the worst moment of my life. My mind immediately began to form an explanation that I knew I was going to have to give the dispatcher. He wasn't going to care that a stupid kid had forgotten about the RPO hook. All he cared about was how he would explain to the Chief Dispatcher that an important Chicago passenger train had been delayed, all because I didn't know how to hand up orders. As I stood there with a sinking heart, I could picture it all. The train would have to stop so the conductor or brakeman could walk some 500 feet to retrieve the orders from the catcher arm. That's assuming the orders had not fallen off in the meantime and they would need to start a ground search.

Then the thought struck me that the story would be embellished to how the "stupid kid" at BJ thought he was supposed to mail the orders to the train. I was sick. As I stood there, sinking into despair and watching the train disappear into the night, I was suddenly uplifted by seeing a ray of light in the darkness. It was the conductor's lamp from the rear vestibule, waving a "highball" toward the engines.

TWO SHORT BLASTS of the chime horns sounded into the night air from the lead E unit. No. 7's marker lights rolled around the curve, the conductor's lamp disappeared, and I heard the resounding and unmistakable *thud* of the Pullman vestibule Dutch door as it slammed shut. I knew No. 7 was not going to be delayed on this night to find the conductor's copy of the order, even though regulations required it. Obviously the conductor thought that as long as the engine crew had them, that was good enough.

As the E8's made transition to Run 8, the stillness of the night was interrupted by the familiar, exhilarating roar of their four V12's leading their charge westward. It spoke to me and said, "All is well; we're on our way with no delays."

I started to breathe again.

And all was well. Only two of us were aware of my mistake, and we were both going to cover it up. The conductor wasn't going to admit he had proceeded without orders, and I, the "greenhorn kid" who had been quickly transformed into a smart one, sure wouldn't say anything, either.

Just to be sure no one had changed his mind, I stood there in the darkness listening to the roar of the E8's. As the sound of their chime horns became more faint in the distance, my confidence grew in the knowledge that our secret would remain just that.

I went back upstairs and picked up the dispatcher's phone. "OS, BJ."

"BJ," came the dispatcher's response.

"Number 7 by Rutherford Junction at 12:57 a.m."

"All right, OK. Did you get the orders to the train?"

"Yes, sir."

Well, it wasn't a complete lie. ■

Looking not unlike its westbound counterpart No. 7, the *Pacific Express*, that the rookie operator faced at BJ is Erie No. 8, the *Atlantic Express*, accelerating out of Canisteo, N.Y., on June 27, 1956, behind an E8-PA duo.



Every 2 1/2 minutes

In the 1950's,
high-speed interurban
Philadelphia & Western
ran an incredible
23 trains an hour

By Ronald DeGraw

TODAY, the operation of express-train schedules on commuter-rail and light-rail lines is often severely limited by several factors. These include a lack of imagination on the part of transit operators; a lack of the on-time performance that permits split-second timings and fast transfers between local and express trains; a lack of high speeds; and a plethora of rules that may tend to make rail lines somewhat safer, but also slower and thus less attractive to passengers.

Yet half a century ago, there was an extremely successful express operation on what now would be termed a light-rail line in the Philadelphia area. The line was the Philadelphia & Western Railway, which still exists as the Norristown High-Speed Line of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation

Authority. The P&W opened in 1907 as an electric interurban line extending from 69th Street Terminal, just outside the Philadelphia city limits in Upper Darby, 11 miles west to Strafford. Five years later, P&W built a branch to Norristown, 13.5 miles from 69th Street. (Over time, the Norristown branch became the main line, and the Strafford branch was abandoned in 1956.) The lines were built with a huge amount of curved track on a totally grade-separated right of way with high-platform stations and third-rail current distribution. One- and two-car trains were the normal type of operation.

When Dr. Thomas Conway arrived at the P&W in 1930, its car fleet wasn't capable of more than 45 mph. Ridership was rapidly decreasing because of automobile and bus competition and the improvement of service on parallel



RONALD DeGraw COLLECTION

Brill Bullet 208 curves past Villanova Junction en route to Norristown in February 1947, four years before P&W launched its high-density schedule. Bullet 202 (right) stands at Norristown station in September '51; trolley wire is for LVT trains.

Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading Company lines. Conway, a former professor of finance who had won an impressive reputation by rebuilding declining interurban lines, knew that drastic steps were necessary to save the P&W as it faced the Great Depression.

Conway ordered radically designed new rolling stock, the very first aerodynamically designed lightweight high-speed rail cars in the world. Built by Philadelphia's J. G. Brill Company, the 10 famous "Brill Bullets" arrived in 1931, and they ran more than 3 million miles each before finally being retired six decades later. Conway super-



GEORGE KRAMBLE'S PHOTO, KRAMBLES-PETERSON COLLECTION

One hour in the evening rush

This June 22, 1951, Philadelphia & Western schedule had the maximum train frequency from 69th St. Note the 1-minute headways!

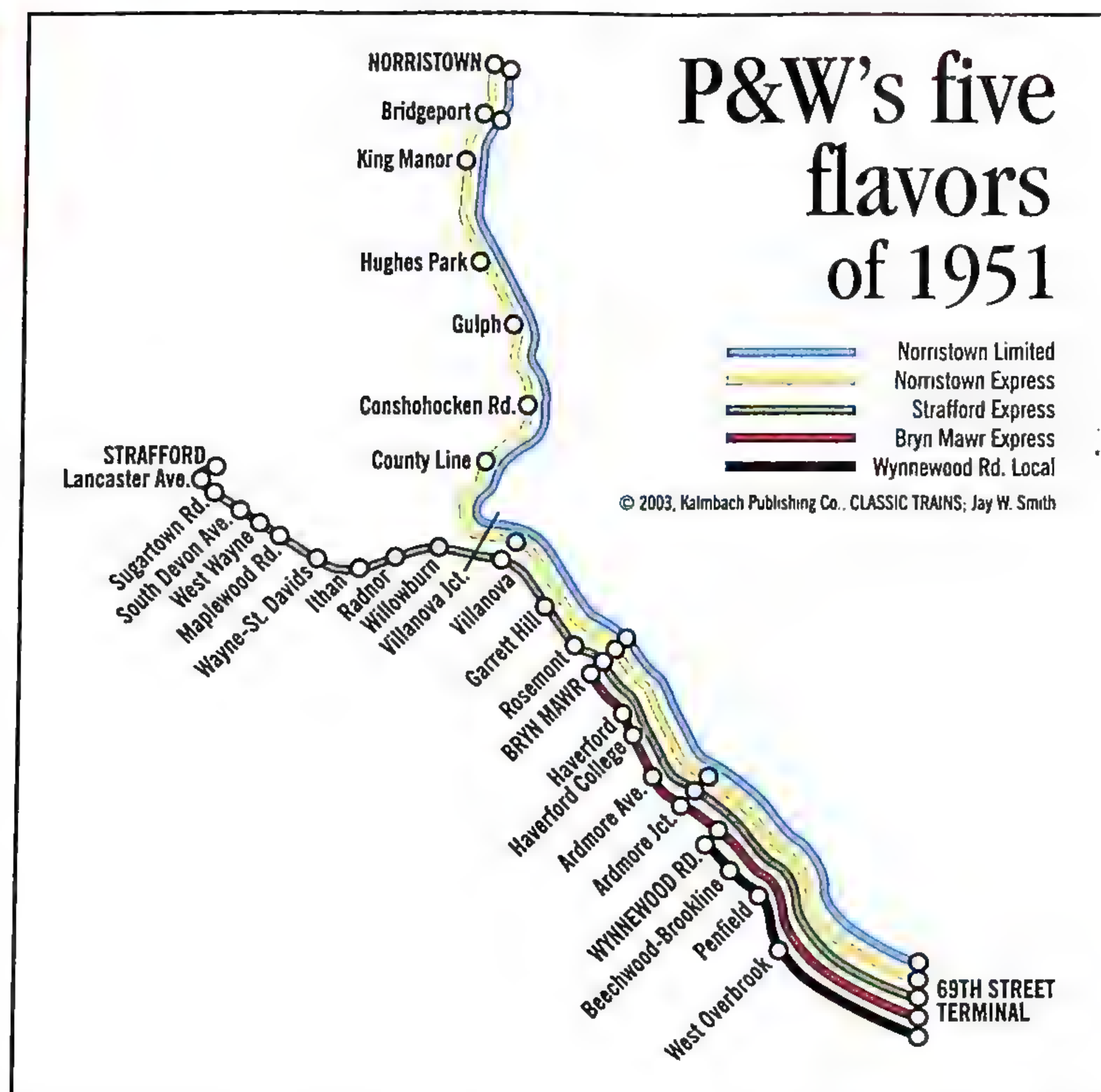
Leave 69th Street	Destination and type
4:59 p.m.	Norristown Limited
5:00 p.m.	Norristown Express
5:01 p.m.	Wynnewood Road Local
5:06 p.m.	Strafford Express
5:07 p.m.	Bryn Mawr Express
5:14 p.m.	Norristown Limited
5:15 p.m.	Norristown Express
5:16 p.m.	Wynnewood Road Local
5:21 p.m.	Strafford Express
5:22 p.m.	Bryn Mawr Express
5:23 p.m.	Wynnewood Road Local
5:29 p.m.	Norristown Limited
5:30 p.m.	Norristown Express
5:31 p.m.	Wynnewood Road Local
5:36 p.m.	Strafford Express
5:37 p.m.	Bryn Mawr Express
5:38 p.m.	Wynnewood Road Local
5:44 p.m.	Norristown Limited
5:45 p.m.	Norristown Express
5:46 p.m.	Wynnewood Road Local
5:51 p.m.	Strafford Express
5:52 p.m.	Bryn Mawr Express
5:53 p.m.	Wynnewood Road Local

Notes

1. Northbound afternoon Norristown Limiteds stopped at Bryn Mawr and Bridgeport only. (Morning northbound Limiteds ran non-stop; morning southbound Limiteds stopped at Ardmore Junction only; afternoon southbound Limiteds stopped at Villanova only or ran non-stop.)
2. Norristown Express trains stopped at Ardmore Junction, Bryn Mawr, and Villanova, then made all stops to Norristown.
3. Strafford Express trains ran non-stop to Ardmore Junction, then Bryn Mawr, then made all stops to Strafford.
4. Bryn Mawr Express trains ran non-stop to Wynnewood Road, then local to Bryn Mawr.

elevated the P&W's many curves, some as much as 8½ inches, so that express trains could comfortably operate continuously at top speed—75 mph.

The result was a very, very fast railroad. Conway instituted "limited" service in the peak periods, with some trains running non-stop for 12¾ miles in 15 minutes. This was 10 minutes faster than the old cars. The faster schedules, together with Conway's other improvements, were a resounding success in bringing back business. When World War II arrived, there were soon too many passengers, and the fast



schedules had to be downgraded in order to accommodate as many riders as possible on each train. Daily ridership quickly rose from about 10,000 to 17,000, and further growth was restricted only by the inability to acquire or operate more cars.

The high ridership generated by the war held steady through most of the late 1940's. In 1949, the Lehigh Valley Transit Company, which connected with the P&W at Norristown, stopped running its passenger trains over the P&W to reach 69th Street Terminal (LVT shut down altogether 2 years later). Removal of the LVT trains, which often operated behind schedule and suffered many breakdowns, permitted P&W's management to reinstate even more-frequent high-speed service than it had run in the 1930's. P&W also installed a new siding at Wynnewood Road Station to permit the operation of more frequent short-turn trains.

On February 9, 1951, P&W launched a completely new schedule that resulted in incredibly frequent service. This was topped by another schedule change, effective June 22, 1951, which carded the greatest number of peak-hour trains in the P&W's history. The schedule called for short-turn trains to Wynnewood Road and Bryn Mawr, express trains to

Strafford and Norristown, and limited trains to Norristown. The longer-distance trains operated every 15 minutes, the Wynnewood Road trains every 7½ minutes. This resulted in the operation of five different classes of trains, including express and limited trains that ran at 75 mph, all on a double-track railroad. The June 22 schedule called for an amazing 23 trains an hour in each direction during peak periods, an average of every 2½ minutes.

Such an operation resulted in much faster travel times for all passengers. Productivity per car and per operator was boosted as well.

Transfer connections were also greatly improved. Wynnewood Road trains covered only the four stations closest to 69th Street Terminal. Bryn Mawr expresses ran non-stop from 69th Street to Wynnewood Road, then called at the next five stations to Bryn Mawr. Strafford trains ran non-stop to Ardmore Junction and Bryn Mawr, then covered the next three stations on the main line before entering the Strafford branch. Norristown express trains stopped at Ardmore Junction, Bryn Mawr, and Villanova, then hit the remaining stations to Norristown. Some of the Norristown limited trains ran non-stop to the end of double track at Bridgeport, then



GEORGE KRAMBLES PHOTO, KRAMBLES-PETERSON COLLECTION

At Norristown in September 1952, Bullet 207 rides P&W's Schuylkill River bridge above the competition: Reading's and Pennsy's electrified lines. At right, Strafford car 170 stands at the end of its namesake line on February 19, 1956; PRR's Strafford station is in the background.

over the single-track Schuylkill River bridge into Norristown, covering the 13.5 miles in 17 minutes. Other limiteds stopped at one or two of the busiest intermediate stations.

Although 69th Street Terminal was the transfer point to and from a major subway-elevated line to center city Philadelphia, 20 percent of the P&W's passengers never went there, traveling only between two intermediate stations. Bryn Mawr was the major transfer point between local and express trains. The northbound schedule guaranteed a wait of no more than about 2 minutes between locals and expresses at Bryn Mawr, with no walking. Northbound passengers simply got off the local and waited briefly on the covered platform for the arrival of an express.

Southbound, the transfer was even easier. There were three tracks at Bryn Mawr. Southbound passengers left their express train, walked across the 10-foot-wide platform and boarded the local standing on the center track. The local would then leave 30 seconds behind the express.

This fast, frequent service is something every transit schedule-maker in the world would today regard as impossible. You simply can't run trains an



AARON FRYER PHOTO, RONALD DEGRAW COLLECTION

average of every 2½ minutes in each direction with five different classes of trains, some running non-stop at 75 mph, on a double-track railroad with two branches.

But it worked perfectly on the Philadelphia & Western for several years, until the number of trains began to drop because of the sharp reduction in transit ridership throughout the 1950's

everywhere in America. It worked on the P&W half a century ago because trains ran precisely on time, motormen were well trained, there were practically no in-service vehicle failures (even though the equipment was 20 or more years old), and because the P&W had gained a reputation for accurate split-second timing—a tradition of which its employees were very proud. ■



THE WORD "CREEPER" can have the connotation of an insect, or a climbing vine, or maybe a slow rock movement. In this case, it refers to a train, one of some repute in the "North Country" of New York state. Canton is a village in the area, about two-thirds up what is now CSX's St. Lawrence Division, formerly Conrail, Penn Central, and New York Central.

In the 1950's, New York Central's St. Lawrence Division was comprised of several routes north from the main line at Utica, Rome, and Syracuse, and a handful of branches to Lake Ontario as well as the interior [see map on page 46]. Some of the trackage still exists, most importantly CSX's route to Montreal, from Syracuse to Massena and be-

yond. The Canton Creeper, on the other hand, bowed out 42 years ago.

The train owed part of its existence to colleges along the line. St. Lawrence University and the Agricultural Technical Institute were in Canton, while Potsdam, the next stop north, was home to Clarkson College and Potsdam State University. The schools were not exactly on the beaten path, and from the time it opened in 1856, SLU—my university for four years—relied heavily on the railroad to transport its students back and forth.

It is thought that St. Lawrence students gave the train the moniker of Canton Creeper for its slow schedule. How or when the name came about, though, has some uncertainty. The consensus is that it became part of stu-

dents' lexicon around World War II; a student even penned a poem, "Canton Creeper," in about 1943.

My first encounter with the Creeper was at the start of my freshman year at SLU, in September 1957. I can visualize the event as if it were yesterday. "*Canton next stop. Ca-a-anton,*" yelled the conductor. In the sleeping car, the porter knocked on my roomette door. "Bag, sir? This is Canton." The overnight train of several cars trundled into the small college town behind an Alco RS3 a few minutes late at 8:17 a.m. The consist was a baggage car, an RPO, a sleeper out of New York, and one or two coaches. The sleeper was one of NYC's *Cascade* series with 10 roomettes and 5 double bedrooms. One coach, through from New York, was usually a

The Canton Creeper

Nicknamed by the college students it served, New York Central's "North Country" passenger trains were deserted for all the familiar reasons, and I too was guilty

By Theodore Shrady • Photos by the author



During the winter of 1959, the "Canton Creeper," officially train 175 on New York Central's St. Lawrence Division, toddles into Canton behind the customary lone Alco RS3 after its overnight run from NYC's Water Level Route main line at Syracuse. Behind the three head-end cars is a through *Cascade*-series sleeper from New York City and a single coach. As soon as the Creeper heads north for Massena, Alco S1 826 will go south with the local freight, a single B&O boxcar in tow ahead of the caboose.



May 21, 1961, marked the departure of the last sleeping car on the "Creeper"; the car is third in the consist, behind the baggage-RPO and a coach. The historic moment generated almost no fanfare. Next day, a Budd RDC would call.

Travelers from outside the immediate area utilized the overnight train to make connections on NYC's main line. For students, the Creeper was convenient because it ran outside normal class hours, which were from 9 a.m. to mid-afternoon.

Local railroaders and townspeople made reference to the Canton Creeper, but in the timetable it was just Nos. 7 and 8. The train carried those numbers through most of the 1950's before being changed in 1958 to 175-176, and then, in its last year, to 189-190. In postwar years, its morning scheduled arrival in Canton varied from 8:05 a.m. to 10:55 a.m., and its down times in the evening varied between 6 and 7 p.m.

An active spot

Although it was not *the* social center of town (several pubs rated higher), the Canton depot was an active place. In 1950, northbound trains arrived at 8:43 a.m., 7:38 p.m., and 11:55 p.m., and southbounds at 7:24 a.m. and 7:38 p.m.; the latter time was a timetabled meet. Mail, baggage, express, and passengers were exchanged for each train. During the day, local freight trains with various Alco diesels switched cars for Canton businesses, intertwined with through freights between Syracuse and Montreal, which were powered by FA's. The Canton depot also had an agent on duty, of course.

During the 1950's and early '60's, Creeper travel times between Utica and Canton varied considerably. The best timing for the 150-mile journey was 4 hours 28 minutes, in 1950; the worst was 6 hours, in 1955. When the train shifted its route to Syracuse-Watertown-Massena for its last couple of years, the 132-mile trip to Canton ranged from 3 hours 40 minutes to 5 hours 25 minutes. The latter times on each route calculate to 25 mph—pokey enough to justify the Creeper nickname.

A newspaper story from 1960 commented on service in 1860, when 4-4-0's ruled the line. "The Taunton (Mass.) engines had a capacity of pulling ten cars at speed. . . . Even under those conditions, the trains of a century ago made time comparable to today's trains through town." In all fairness, however, much baggage, express, and mail was handled at stations in the North Country; the train often lingered a full 10 minutes in some towns. People and businesses along the line depended on the Creeper for such services.

Fare increases, as well as decreasing ridership, played a big part in the reduction of North Country passenger service. In 1952, using New York to Massena as an example, the one-way coach fare was \$13.44. By 1961 it had risen only \$3—good news for students, if not for the railroad. On the other hand, the Pullman fare in a roomette jumped from \$23.92 to \$36.23 in the same period. An automobile at the time could go a good distance on \$5 or \$6 worth of gas, and students often car-pooled to save even more. I, too, am guilty—I used the train only in my fresh-



man year, then "graduated" to a car.

By early 1960, the Central petitioned the Public Service Commission, and later the Interstate Commerce Commission, to abandon passenger service on the St. Lawrence Division and elsewhere in upstate New York, citing annual losses of \$320,000. The PSC denied the request, but the railroad did win the right to discontinue sleeper service a year later.

The *Watertown Daily Times* reported that the last sleeper went south on May 21, 1961. I witnessed the event at the Canton depot but was not aware of any fanfare, just the usual loading of baggage and mail. I do not even recall if any passengers boarded. The newspaper did report there was a short hand-



JOHN C. ILLMAN

shaking ceremony at Watertown. To most of us at St. Lawrence, that train was really the last Canton Creeper, even though the lone Beeliner that carried on was still referred to by the Creeper name.

By contrast, the last Beeliner, ending all passenger service to the North County, bid farewell with a record crowd on February 15, 1964. The *Times* stated that 120 passengers rode it up in the morning and about 90 down that evening. Engineer Kent H. Cosselman, true to tradition, tried to keep the train on schedule, but was hard-pressed to do so with throngs of people and the media at many of the stations. Conductor William Carson had his hands full; it was the most traffic he had seen in

years. To make things worse, the single car slinked into Syracuse almost 2 hours late owing to a freight derailment between there and Watertown.

The train we called the Canton Creeper might well be a lifetime memory for many of us who attended St. Lawrence because it was always there. Some depended on it for transportation, while others just took note of its meandering through town twice a day, reminding us of a certain hour to be somewhere. Even with the hectic schedules that most students had, I managed to see the little train come and go on many occasions, though I photographed it only a couple of times. Like others, I took it for granted.

I suppose the train's name was justi-

Watertown, N.Y., 59 miles south of Canton and 73 miles north of Syracuse, was division headquarters and an NYC hub. It boasted a big yard, roundhouse, and a five-platform, nine-track passenger terminal. On July 29, 1955, two RS3's led train 59, the *New Yorker*, into the depot.

fied, but I often wonder if others called it something else. Perhaps Clarkson students in Potsdam knew it as the "Potsdam Poky," or Watertowners the "Watertown Wanderer." The fine folks at the end of the line might have referred to it as the "Massena Meanderer." No matter, the Canton Creeper was our name, and we loved it anyway. The name is still heard to this day, as alums fondly remember and refer to the trains as "the Creeper." ■

Photo Section



THREE PHOTOS, MERT LEET

CANADIAN CAPERS: On a quiet Friday, August 15, 1952, at Brantford, Ontario, Grand River Railroad's home-built (Preston shop, 1921) steeplecab 226 switches cars, while at the carbarn rest baggage motor 622, a GRR 800-series coach, and car 953 (Preston, 1915) of sister line Lake Erie & Northern. The two interurbans, which ran 66 miles from Waterloo to Port Dover on Lake Erie, were leased to CP in 1908, quit passenger service April 24, 1956, and dieselized October 1, 1961. About 300 miles to the north (opposite page), at North Bay, Ont., in October 1954, Canadian Pacific 2-8-0 3422, a 1904 Schenectady product, switched in the yard.





THREE ST. LOUIS SCENES



EAST SIDE MAZE: The men, the switches, the shacks, the diamonds. In East St. Louis, Ill., trackage of the Terminal Railroad Association seemed an impenetrable maze, and would remain so well into the 1960's. On March 5, 1948, we're in the cab of the E unit leading Illinois Central 22, the St. Louis-Chicago *Green Diamond*, as it nears the first junction north of Relay Station, where a TRRA O-6-O pushes a transfer hack eastward. Not to worry—we're lined to diverge right. Out of St. Louis at 9 a.m., IC train 22 made its 6-stop, 294-mile run in 5 hours 10 minutes.



TRAINS: WILLARD V. ANDERSON

WEST SIDE HIGHBALL: On June 26, 1942, we're looking back from the lead locomotive's tender along new homebuilt (at Sedalia, Mo., from a 1930 Lima 2-8-4) 4-8-4 2216 as they doublehead a westbound Missouri Pacific freight past Lake Junction at the bottom of Kirkwood Hill. The bridge in the background carried streetcars of St. Louis Public Service's Manchester line between Maplewood (to the left) and Webster Groves. It survived to carry buses, then was abandoned, although it was still in place in the 1970's.

DOWNTOWN, THE 101 CLUB: Four E7's at St. Louis Union Station in June 1949 share a number. Katy's only pair, two-year-old red-and-cream 101A/101C, back the *Texas Special*, just in from San Antonio, into the depot as GM&O red-and-maroon 101/-101A—still lettered "Alton Route" to reflect the 1947 merger—wait to couple onto the *Abraham Lincoln* for Chicago. They were among EMD's first E7's, built for Alton Railroad in 1945.



LOUIS A. MARRE COLLECTION



WAYNE LEEMAN



Photo Section

TOP OF THE WORLD Fair Steam
engine is shown in Colorado's
Frontier Pass in Winter 1960 as
Colorado & Southern 2480 641
pushes steam-powered rotary snow-
plow 99201 on the 14-mile line from
Leadville up to Climax at elevation
161,320 the highest point on an
adhesion railroad in North America.

Ken Crust, J. D. Ingles Collection



WYOMING MEETING: Up from Denver in November 1965 to track down brand-new Burlington Route U25C's, the photographer chanced upon this simultaneous two-train arrival in Guernsey. The town, on the Q's Northport (Nebr.)-Casper (Wyo.) line, was also the operational north end of the Colorado & Southern (by trackage rights on CB&Q from Wendover) and the south end of Colorado Fuel & Iron's subsidiary Colorado & Wyoming's 6-mile spur to an iron-ore mine at Sunrise. That's C&W's only SW900 (among 14 SW8's) with hoppers bound for the Pueblo (Colo.) mill. (C&W had two other divisions, at the mill and a mine spur out of Trinidad, Colo.) CB&Q SD9 454 is crossing the North Platte River bridge with a local from Casper. Today, Guernsey is a busy BNSF Powder River Basin coal-train crew-change and servicing point. Before Burlington built through here in 1914, C&W's mine spur crossed the river just to the left and went west to connect with the C&S at Hartville Junction.



IN THAT WEST TEXAS TOWN: It's about 2:30 on a sunny afternoon in 1955 at El Paso Union Station as the daily meeting of two streamliners takes place. At track 8, railroaders gather in the shadow of Alco PA 6044 leading Southern Pacific's *Sunset Limited*, train No. 2 from Los Angeles to New Orleans. Behind it on track 7 is EMD E8 2015 on the point of Texas & Pacific train No. 8, the *Westerner*, which picks up a through sleeper from L.A. off the *Sunset* for Dallas and also carries El Paso-Fort Worth and El Paso-Dallas sleepers, coaches for Fort Worth and New Orleans, and a diner-lounge as far as Big Spring, Texas. Fort Worth is 615 miles and almost 15 hours away. For the *Sunset*, it's 1200 miles and 25 hours to Louisiana's Crescent City.



WILLIAM HARRY



HOL WAGNER



JOHN S. INGLES; COLLECTION OF J. DAVID INGLES

TWO OUT OF THREE: Riding east on Northern Pacific's *North Coast Limited* on a bright fall 1969 morning approaching Butte, Mont., the photographer was in his sleeping car's vestibule keeping an eye out for action in Silver Bow Canyon where the NP, Milwaukee Road, and Butte, Anaconda & Pacific all ran parallel to each other. Just after passing under the BA&P bridge, which carried the former electric copper-hauler over the two Class 1's, what should appear but a westbound Milwaukee freight, one of the few scheduled trains on the line at the time. Talk about luck!

A Union Pacific fireman's fast run on an old 4-8-2

By Les Clark

IN 1953, as a newly hired fireman on the Oregon Short Line of the Union Pacific, I was working out of my hometown of Glenns Ferry, Idaho. In those days, the town was a subdivision point with a fairly busy yard and a 12-stall roundhouse. The community sits along the Snake River, and the railroad has a formidable climb to higher plains on either side.

I was assigned to the fireman's extra board, working westward 168 miles to Huntington, Ore., the border point for the OSL's Idaho and Oregon divisions. One through passenger run and about half the freight runs were still steam-powered, the most common engines being the 3800-class 4-6-6-4's. There also were 2-8-8-0's, 2-10-2's, 2-8-2's, 2-8-0's, and 4-8-4's. A few 7000-class 4-8-2's were seen occasionally, but they were an endangered species.

I was called for duty in the early afternoon of December 27, along with engineer Frank Crane and a train crew, to deadhead to Huntington on No. 17, the *Portland Rose*. Next to the streamlined *City of Portland*, 17 was the OSL's premier passenger train. It usually left Glenns Ferry at 2 p.m., arriving in Huntington at 6:30.

We were not told why we were deadheading, but it must've been important for us to be riding the *Portland Rose*. We spent most of the trip in the men's room-smoker section of a coach, where we could swap yarns and try to second-guess what kind of a special train we were going to get.

Upon arriving at Huntington, we were told we would probably be called for duty about 9 p.m., but not what train we were to get. Deadheading was considered rest, so we could be worked a full 16 hours upon call. We headed to a local beanery for dinner and then to the railroad crew house where we could read, play cards, or whatever to pass the time.

We hadn't been at the crew house long when the call boy arrived with the

Hurry up—



W. F. POSTLES PHOTO; ILLUSTRATION EFFECTS BY LUANN HAAS WILLIAMS

-but why?

announcement, "Crane and Clark on duty 9:49 p.m. for Extra 7019 East." He had no information on the train, but, at least we knew when we were going to work and on what. A 7000-class engine added to the mystery. Before the arrival of the 800-class 4-8-4's in 1936, the 7000's (built by American's Brooks Works in 1922) were the UP's top passenger power, but by 1953 they were pretty tired.

We guessed we'd be pulling a troop train, but they usually drew 800's or Challengers. Perhaps 7019 was an engine off of the Oregon Division going to the shops at Pocatello, but if so, why would the railroad go to the expense of our deadhead? It had to be important and fast for us to draw a passenger engine, even if it was old.

My bubble burst when I learned our train consisted of 56 empty gondolas. Who, on the 27th of December, needed 56 gondolas in such a rush?

We boarded the 7019 and, after preliminary work, headed into the yard to couple onto our train. We finished our air test, got our orders, and began to roll about 10:30 p.m. Frank Crane was a very good engineer, and it was a pleasure to fire for him. Initially he put on a grouchy appearance, but it was just that—appearance. After getting to know him, I found him to be a good friend and teacher.

Three miles out of Huntington, the railroad crossed the Snake River from Oregon into Idaho on a high deck bridge with a sharp curve at the east end. After clearing the curve, Frank got serious and put the 7019 to work. The 7000's were great to listen to, as they had a nice sharp exhaust. She was an oil burner, and it was now time to sand the flues.

Sanding the flues was necessary to remove the accumulation of oily soot that collected on the walls of the flues and acted as an insulator, reducing the steaming abilities of the engine. It was removed by feeding sand from a storage bin located on the front of the tender through a small door in the firebox with a scoop while the engine was

working hard. The heavy draft literally sucked the sand through the flues, scouring them in the process.

The 7019 was unusual in that it had a tongue-and-groove wooden wall across the back of the cab. A plain house-type door allowed passage into the cab from the tender gangway. It was a sort of vestibule cab applied while the 7019 was used as a passenger helper in Oregon's Blue Mountains to protect the crew from the cold while backing the engine.

Nampa, Idaho, is about halfway between Huntington and Glenns Ferry. Most freight trains entered the yard at Nampa for considerable switching. Meanwhile, the crews would go to dinner. The first half of the run mostly followed the river and was nearly flat, so, except for some mandated slow-downs

**The track was straight
as a string with a sag in the
middle — a real race track,
and race we did!**

through towns, maximum track speed was the rule. On the way to Nampa, we met a freight in the hole at Weiser and another at Nyssa, where we stopped for water. We got to Nampa at 2 a.m. We were directed right up the main track past the depot like a passenger train, bypassing the yard. This meant we also bypassed dinner, but it was worth it to get a fast run.

East of Nampa we traveled on the freight main line toward Glenns Ferry, which has a long grade for about 25 miles to Orchard, where the passenger line from Nampa through Boise rejoined the freight main. The 7019 really talked going up that grade and steamed quite well. Of course, a lot of it had to do with Frank's skill as an engineer. He knew the exact combination of throttle position and cut-off for maximum power and efficiency, a gift of only a chosen few possessed.

We took water at Orchard and met

another freight, after which we made a respectable run to Mountain Home, where we headed in the siding for No. 25. This was a nameless mail train that originated in Pocatello and ran to Portland. It was always pulled by a 4-8-4 and usually had only about seven or eight cars, so it was almost always on time. However, 25 was not due at Mountain Home until 6:02 a.m., which meant we spent quite a bit of hungry time waiting for it.

As soon as 25 cleared, we headed out, and after the rear brakeman lined the switch behind us, we really took off. I suspect Frank may have felt it was the last time he would have a chance to run one of the 7000 "Sport Models," and he really poured it on. It's 12 miles from Mountain Home to Reverse, the top of the hill descending toward Glenns Ferry. The track was straight as a string with a sag in the middle—a real race track, and race we did! The old engine was pretty loose and started nosing from side to side quite violently at high speed. One moment I could not see the track ahead, and the next I could see it and the pole line on the other side. It was scary! I consoled myself with the knowledge that Frank knew what he was doing, but I felt relieved when he set the brakes for some 40-mph curves.

We entered Glenns Ferry yard, took the 7019 to the roundhouse to leave it for the hostler, and tied up at 8:20 a.m. It had been a long day and night, but an exciting one.

I never learned what happened to the 56 gondolas, or why someone was in such a hurry for them. I do know, though, that the 7019 broke its main rod on the fireman's side on its next trip west out of Glenns Ferry. My good friend Butch Wise was firing it and told me he thought the engine was going to turn over any moment as the rear end of the main rod kept digging into the ties and ballast. Fortunately it stayed on the rails. I was glad it didn't happen during our fast run the night before! ■

NYC's eastbound Mercury roars toward Detroit west of Ann Arbor on New Year's Eve 1953. The J-3a Hudson has most of the streamlining from her original assignment on the 1938 Century.



ROBERT HADLEY SIFTS THROUGH a pile of 8x10 black-and-white prints on a basement work table and stops suddenly. "This is one I really liked," he says, pointing to an arresting image of a streamlined New York Central Hudson locomotive bearing down on the photographer during a snowstorm. It's everything you could ask for in an action picture: motion, detail, a palpable sense of urgency. "My wife and I were out together to get that picture, New Year's Eve, 1953. That's the *Mercury*, and it was in a real hurry."

Thank goodness Hadley was standing out along the NYC right of way near Ann Arbor, Mich., that wild afternoon. For that matter, thank goodness he was standing at a lot of other places in a photographic career that spans nearly seven decades. Like so many other men of his generation who photographed the last years of steam railroading—an elite fraternity known for their creativity and insight—Bob Hadley has given us an indispensable visual record of time and place. His home turf was Michigan and the Upper Midwest.

The earmarks of a Hadley image are quickly recognizable. The train is usually shot from a conventional angle. But unlike other photographers who practiced the "wedge" shot, he would step back and take in more of the scene. He chose his spots with care. With his generous foregrounds and backgrounds, you can see the trains have somewhere to go, and you can see where they've been. In the details of the right of way and the landscape lies a true sense of what this lost world was really like. It was a practiced approach. "I liked doing action shots," he says, "but I also always tried to convey the surrounding scenery, to give a feel for the location."

Hadley grew up in a railroad family. Born in 1912, he lived in Bancroft, Mich., a few miles west of Durand on the Grand Trunk Western Chicago-Port Huron main line. Hadley's grandfather was a GTW crossing watchman in Bancroft. "It was an interesting job," says Hadley. "My grandfather worked in a tower, and had an air pump he used to pump the gates down from the tower, which guarded two streets. He never had a serious accident there." His grandfather guarded that crossing for 40 years.

Hadley's mother died when he



The scene is urgent on the curved platform at Toledo Union Station (top): baggage carts crowd the platform and the 4-6-4 takes on water as an NYC train awaits the highball to head east.

Spit-and-polish heavy 4-6-2 491 leads Chesapeake & Ohio train 1, the George Washington, out of Cincinnati Union Terminal (above) on a late afternoon in 1940 for Washington, D.C.



Hadley positioned himself beneath the coaling tower at New York Central's sprawling Livernois Yard in Detroit in 1938 to frame several locomotives. Pacific 4631 is to the left of two 2-8-2's.

A highway overpass west of Effingham, Ill., was Hadley's vantage point (opposite page) in 1947 to shoot a St. Louis-bound Pennsylvania freight led by one of the road's bulky J1 class 2-10-4's.

On one of his infrequent trips to the East, Hadley in 1938 caught an Erie commuter train, led by elegant K-1 Pacific 2535, slicing through the "Bergen Arches" Palisades cut into Jersey City.



was 3, and when his father married a Detroit teacher a few years later, the family moved to the Motor City, where his father got a job as a sales manager for an Oldsmobile dealer. But the Hadleys would return to Bancroft each summer, and at age 16, young Bob got a job helping out around the depot there. He mostly did odd jobs, anything to assist the GTW agent cope with people getting on and off the four passenger trains that stopped in Bancroft each day.

Another teenage job took Hadley in a different direction. In his sophomore year, he got a job as a theater usher, working for a man who owned several movie houses. Soon Hadley was doing much more than showing people their seats: he began lettering theater ads and signs, taking advantage of the artistic eye he'd begun to nurture. "I really kind of took to that business," says Hadley.

His work for the theater chain led to a job with the Walker Co., a local billboard agency. Hadley painted and lettered advertising billboards for a time, but soon he found a way to explore something new. "If a Walker client wanted a sign, we needed to get a photograph of his building, to make a sample of how the sign would look," explains Hadley. So the young man picked up a camera and began working with Walker's staff to learn the basics of architectural photography.

Hadley's interest in photography picked up momentum after he married his wife, Frances, in 1934 (she died in 1998). "I got real serious around that time," he recalls. "I built my own darkroom, my own enlarger, and even prepared my own chemicals. I never bought the prepared stuff. Mostly I became a self-taught photographer."

The approach of World War II in-

terrupted Hadley's domestic life, but even his induction into the Army in 1941 would prove fortuitous once he got a chance to explain his passion for photography to an Army interviewer. After basic training in San Diego and a stint with the coast artillery at Fort Stevens in Oregon, Hadley put in for a transfer to the Army Air Corps. He got it, winning assignment to an observation plane squadron at Fort Lewis, Wash. "We did a lot of reconnaissance photography. I'd go out on the flight line, put on a chute, and go up to shoot from an observation plane. I learned more about photography from those guys than I ever would have learned in school."

Hadley next spent several months at an air base in Casper, Wyo., before going to England for two years. Working with a B-17 squadron based at Glatton, he learned the technique of



The coaling tower at Plymouth, Mich., stands redundant as E7 102 of C&O's Pere Marquette District, still lettered PM, flashes by with Detroit-Grand Rapids Pere Marquette train 3 in 1953.

Nickel Plate train 7, the Westerner (opposite, top), departs Fort Wayne, Ind., behind a pair of Alco PA "Bluebirds." The city's new grade-separation for NKP would change this scene in 1955.

For a year in 1950-51, five Grand Trunk Western trains exchanged passengers, express, and mail in an hour at Durand, Mich. (lower right). Facing the camera about 3:35 p.m. is a streamlined 4-8-4 on train 17, the Inter-City Limited, which will depart at 3:40 for Chicago. At right is 4-6-2 5629 off Muskegon-Detroit train 56, which will go at 3:55; its RPO is at left. Behind 5629 are the cars of counterpart 21, also due out at 3:55. East of the depot are the cars of Durand-Bay City-Alpena 39, a through run with Detroit & Mackinac that lasted just a year, due out at 4:15. Chicago-Toronto 20 will arrive at 3:55 and go at 4:05.

combat aerial photography involving the use of a camera mounted in the bomber's radio compartment.

Hadley's photographs were used to assess damage on bombing raids. By the time he left the Air Corps in August 1945, he had reached the rank of technical sergeant.

Back in Detroit, Hadley resumed his commercial photography career, ultimately landing a job with farm implement manufacturer Ferguson Corp., which later became Massey-Ferguson. For a guy who loved to photograph trains, the new job was ideal, combining his skill for shooting outdoors with his interest in big machines. Hadley had a perfect foil in the giant red combines and swathers and tractors he shot for Massey-Ferguson ads and catalogs. "Suddenly my job was my hobby, and my hobby was my job," says Hadley. "And, working in the wheat fields, I learned more respect for farmers. They're 100 percent Americans." Hadley retired from Massey-Ferguson in 1976.

Throughout all his working years,

Robert A. Hadley





In 1949, Hadley crouched on a Grand Trunk Western siding near the Michigan State Fairgrounds in northern Detroit as 4-6-2 5634 hustled by with a commuter train for Pontiac.

Its white striping grimy, Wabash 4-6-2 668 (top right) steps away from Detroit's Fort Street Union Station in 1939 with a midday train for Fort Wayne, Chicago (via PRR), and St. Louis.

Leaving Detroit in 1939, Pere Marquette 4-6-2 718 steams under the former Detroit Monroe & Toledo Short Line Interurban bridge west of Delray junction with train 7 for Grand Rapids.



Robert A. Hadley



Robert Hadley photographed trains as a hobby. Ranging as far from Detroit as his free time and budget would allow, he covered railroading with his own distinctive eye for action and atmospheric detail.

Of course, Michigan railroads were his favorite subjects. Hadley's photos are indispensable to anyone interested in railroading in the Wolverine State during the 1930's, '40's, and '50's. And he caught it all: New York Central limiteds roaring down the Michigan Central main line; little Pacific-powered Pere Marquette passenger trains; Grand Trunk Western locomotives congregating at the famous depot in Durand. Hadley traveled beyond Michigan, too, shooting trains mostly in Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio.

They were good times, to hear him tell it. "In those days we walked all over railroad property," he recalls. "The word 'trespassing' didn't even exist, as far as I was concerned. Crews waved at you, and they always had a big smile on their faces. Now? You're a bum."

Hadley continues to pursue his railroad hobby with an energy that stands in stark contrast to his age. He still travels frequently to railfan hot spots (the old Nickel Plate-B&O-

C&O junction town of Fostoria, Ohio, is a favorite) and maintains active memberships in the Grand Trunk Western Historical Society, the Steam Railroading Institute in Owosso, Mich. (operators of Pere Marquette 2-8-4 No. 1225), and the venerable Michigan Railroad Club, in which he proudly holds membership No. 1.

As a professional photographer, Hadley is particular about his equipment, whether he's shooting to pay the mortgage or simply doing it for fun. At Massey-Ferguson, his main camera was a 5x7 format Dierdorf, although he sometimes worked with an 11x14 Dierdorf and an 8x10 Kodak. For most of his early railroad photography—including the examples illustrating this article—he used either a 3¼x4¼ Speed Graphic or a 2¼ Hasselblad, "my basic Army camera."

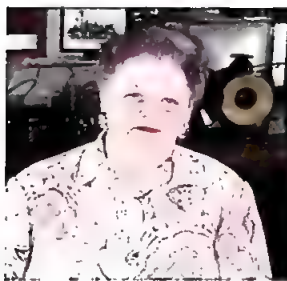
Today, Hadley relies on a 645 Mamiya Pro, a single-lens-reflex camera in the 1½ x 2¼ format. He also continues to use handmade equipment of his own design, including his black-and-white enlarger and a film magazine that allows him to shoot with one camera in both black-and-white and color. All this equipment resides in the basement of his neat-as-a-pin brick ranch house in Beverly Hills, Mich., a leafy old

northwest suburb of Detroit. In addition to his darkroom, the basement houses a collection of 6000 negatives, many his own, of course, but also those of the late Bill Miller, a prolific steam-era photographer who also covered much of Michigan. The negatives are stored in meticulously catalogued file cabinets. Accompanying contact prints are kept in a long row of three-ring binders.

The phone rings often as Hadley shows a visitor around his railroad sanctuary. An amazingly fit 91, he is still a very busy man, with several area friends who help keep his social schedule full. But there are times for reflection, too, and as he pages through a binder labeled "NYC," he can't help looking back. Like many photographers who chronicled railroading in the years when steam gave way to diesel, he wishes he'd done more.

"You know, I thought this stuff—steam locomotives, early diesels, all those passenger trains—would be around forever. If I'd only thought about it a little bit more, I'd have shot even more."

Maybe so, Bob. But at least three generations of people who've admired your pictures can testify that you did more than your share. **I**



Mary Elizabeth of the 'NC'

How a woman succeeded in the man's world of railroading

By Ken Ingram

MARY ELIZABETH CHAMBLISS is very proud of a long career in railroading—just ask her. These days she's still "on duty" as an enthusiastic volunteer at the Jackson, Tenn., Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Depot and Railroad Museum. The stories of her experiences, from the NC&StL to CSX, and the people she knew and worked with, are indeed a treasure.

Mary Elizabeth, as she is known, started as an operator on the "NC" as a summer job, and wound up 40 years later, in 1988, as an agent for CSX. She had an impressive career—even more so when you consider the times. James Brown's song sums up those days best, "It's a Man's, Man's, Man's World," because, on the railroad, it sure enough was.

The Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway long has been called "Grandpa's Road," for the multi-generations of family members working on this distinctly southern trunk line. In common with the social aspects of U.S. industry throughout most of the 20th century, this reflected generations of family men. There are countless examples of grandfathers, fathers, and sons throughout the corporate history—from the operating department and shop mechanics right on to the top, as in Col. E. W. Cole and Maj. John W. Thomas and their sons, Whiteford Cole and "Little John" Thomas, all of whom held the NC's presidency.

Throughout its 157-year history, from beginnings as the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad in 1845 through merger into the Louisville & Nash-





OPPOSITE PAGE, KEN INGRAM PHOTO; ABOVE, MARY E. CHAMBLISS COLLECTION

ville in 1957 to those portions run today by CSX and short lines, the road has been referred to by a multitude of monikers. Among them are "The Tennessee Line," "The Lookout Mountain Route," "The Dixie Line," "the N&C," and others—but most commonly it is just simply "the NC."

The NC was a road of many notable firsts, even though after 1880 its purse strings were closely held by parent L&N:

- First 4-8-4 locomotives in the South, the famous "Dixie" classes of J2's and J3's
- First railroad in the nation to offer a pension plan to employees, years before the National Railroad Retirement Act
- No bankruptcies or major mismanagement
- First southern line, as determined by L&N

p.r. people some years later, and possibly the first in the U.S., to employ female freight agents.

MARY ELIZABETH BRACKEN (as she was born) came to Grandpa's Road having learned the railroad business firsthand—from her father, Robert W. Bracken, a telegraph operator. He had learned the trade from the NC's operator at Buena Vista, Tenn., by paying the operator \$15 a month and doing chores around the depot for free. Robert Bracken hired on permanently with the NC in 1913 and worked for the road until his death in 1953. He worked several stations on the NC's Paducah & Memphis (P&M) and Nashville divisions, and then became the second trick (3 to 11 p.m.) operator at Paris, Tenn., where he

Mary Elizabeth poses in the Jackson depot in 1952 with fellow NC'ers (from left) Ira Ripley, Roy Freear, Arthur Luckman, Clarence Noel, Al Muse, and Roy Bledsoe . . . and today (facing page) in the same building, now a museum.

Doubleheaded 4-8-4's on a oil train typify wartime traffic flooding the NC when Mary first went to work with her father.

NC&StL





MARY E. CHAMBLISS COLLECTION



NC&STL

Mary learned railroad-
ing at the knee of her
father, Robert Bracken
(above), second-trick
operator at Jackson.

NC's new *City of Mem-
phis* streamliner car-
ried Mary to Bruceton,
Tenn., where she aced
her rules exam.

worked for years, and where Mary was born.

One night in 1932 while on duty at Paris, Bracken became violently ill. His appendix had ruptured, and in those days as now, this was a critical medical situation—and one from which he never fully recovered. He was in the hospital for 48 days, and then on sick leave for 8 years. By 1940 the country had begun to emerge from the Great Depression. As the economy improved, people and goods began to move again, and the NC's business began to pick up. Called back from sick leave, Bracken was soon working second trick at Jackson, Tenn.

Almost immediately after his return to work, World War II began. Mary's older brother was off in the service, and her mother went to work at the Milan Army Ammunition Plant. Like Mary's father, her mother also worked second trick. This left 10-year-old Mary needing a place to stay, so she tagged along with her father to work.

GOING TO WORK with her dad served two purposes. His health still wasn't good, so Mary could help him with his operator duties, and it kept her from being home alone. World War II was in high gear, and the NC had gone from the lazy years of the Depression to having more business than it could handle. Trains were running on the NC's Memphis-Nashville-Chattanooga-Atlanta main line like never before. Her father was so busy with train orders that little Mary could truly give him a hand with his clerical work. This is when Mary fell in love with railroading. The freight house, where her father worked, and the passenger depot at Jackson had become her second homes; the Jackson NC employees were her extended family.

For all of this, Mary never really believed she'd have a career with the railroad. Then the war ended, and the NC began to give operators two days a week off instead of their normal one day.

This led to a shortage of operators, and Mary could easily step right in. The superintendent's office called Robert Bracken to see if his daughter would like an operator's job, but he said no—Mary was going to go to college. This was in 1948, and Mary, then a high school senior, didn't learn of the conversation until much later. The NC persisted, and Mary was allowed to work for the summer—a summer that ended up lasting 40½ years.

Mary rode to Bruceton, hub for the NC's Nashville and P&M divisions and the intermediate yard between Memphis and Nashville, on the NC's new streamliner *City of Memphis* [Summer 2000 CLASSIC TRAINS] to take her rules exam. Chief Dispatcher C. E. Nelson gave her the exam. After she took it he said, "Little girl, you go home and tell your dad you know this rulebook better than he does." Her father had always stressed upon Mary the importance of train orders and rules—they represented people's lives.

Scared and excited all at once, Mary was now going to be a paid NC employee, her seniority date established as July 15, 1948. This was a lot of responsibility for a 17-year-old, but through her father's example and her own experience, she was up to the task.

Every September 1, the NC put on a "cotton" operator's job at Somerville, Tenn., that lasted through December 31. Somerville's agent governed several smaller depots that shipped seasonal baled cotton, and this required him to be out of the office quite a bit. Mary bid for the operator's job, her first *real* job on the NC.

"I remember 'hooping up' train orders to the steam-locomotive crews," she says. "I would be close to the track at first—but by the time the engine got to me, I would be as far back as I could reach. Those steam engines rocked back and forth, and it was hard to stand there, with that big hunk of steel coming toward you—rocking. It was especially hard to hoop up orders to a double-



J. PARKER LAMB



MARY E. CHAMBLISS COLLECTION

header. And occasionally, a hot cinder would fall into your hair!"

When this job ended, Mary went back on the extra board, filling relief, and then in 1950 became the third-trick operator at Lexington, Tenn. After several years at Lexington, Mary became a relief operator again, filling off-duty relief at Jackson, Lexington, and Somerville. These were known as "grasshopper" jobs, because they required one to jump from one location to the next as needed. Then, in 1955, Centralized Traffic Control was completed through to Memphis, spelling the doom for the NC's telegraph operators.

WITH THE END of the operator jobs and, by the mid-1950's, the impending merger of the NC&StL into the L&N, Mary had seen the writing on the wall and had been learning the agent's role. Both the NC and L&N, like other roads, utilized base and mobile freight agents. Base agents were assigned to one station; mobile agents serviced depots in a 200-mile radius. Before the August 30, 1957, merger, Mary had filled the agent's position, once again in a relief role, at the NC's yard office in Memphis. After the merger, this yard was closed and operations were consolidated into the L&N's Leewood Yard.

Leewood was fascinating for Mary. Here she witnessed the yardmaster and switching crews making up trains, and how they "wrote up" the trains using teletype machines, all new to Mary. Her favorite jobs were the train-order jobs and watching the movement of trains. From 1960 to 1973, Mary was the L&N's base agent at Lexington.

Change came again, with L&N's 1973 closure of the stations at Lexington, Huntingdon, Camden, Waverly, and Dickson, and the L&N's own incorporation into the Family Lines, finally to become CSX. Out of all of these closed agencies came a base agent's position at Bruceton, and a mobile agent to service the closed stations. Mary

bid for the mobile job, which involved visiting each of these stations daily. Although the L&N no longer operated these stations on a full-time basis, customers continued to ship freight from them. It was while working as a mobile agent, with counterpart Edna Mae Cole serving as the Bruceton base agent, that Mary learned the NC&StL and L&N were the only roads in the South to employ women as base and mobile agents.

Mary and Robert Chambliss had been married on January 30, 1954. He was a trainman with the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio, and they lived in Jackson, Tenn. It was a railroad hub, with tracks of the NC, Illinois Central, and GM&O all crossing there, and a GM&O backshop. Robert Chambliss once told a friend that he had learned early on in his marriage that the NC was the best railroad there ever was! Their son, Paul, after graduation from college, worked as a clerk in L&N's Bruceton offices, making for three generations of railroaders.

WHERE DO 40 YEARS GO? With Mary, they're so easily recalled. A driving force behind the City of Jackson's NC&StL Depot and Railroad Museum, Mary can be found volunteering her time in the 1907 structure. The museum suffered major damage in a May 2003 tornado, but reopened on September 6 [see page 101].

"I think I worked in the most exciting time of railroading," she says. "So many changes I witnessed. I saw the steam engines go out, the diesels come in, the last of the Morse code. I saw radios, computers, and copy machines come in—and the small stations close. The mergers and name changes, and how it all came to be known as CSX, one of the largest railroads in the nation. I feel a sense of pride, knowing that my dad and I were a small part of this. I feel blessed to have had this wonderful life. I would never say that I was a good railroader, but I think I can say no one ever loved being a part of it more than I did." ■

At Bruceton engine terminal on September 16, 1959, two years after the merger, the diesels wear NC&StL colors (blue and gray on the F, maroon and yellow on the others) and small L&N initials.

In the 1970's when she was an L&N mobile agent, Mary posed with the company van she drove on her rounds.

Copper Range recalled

A scruffy little Upper Michigan copper-hauler bucked snow and hard times
before quietly slipping into history

By Robert C. Anderson • Photos by the author



WHEN I WAS A BOY IN IRONWOOD, MICH., it wasn't unusual for Dad to say, "It's a nice day; let's take a ride." On one of those nice days—Friday, July 25, 1958—came my introduction to the Copper Country, and the distinctive railroads of that remote area of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Many might associate the term "Copper Country" with Arizona, where copper is still mined today. But the rich copper deposits of the far northern area of Upper Michigan, known as the Keweenaw Peninsula (KEY-wuh-naw), were mined in quantity beginning in the mid-19th century. These deposits, known as native (or metallic) copper, required only rather simple processing to yield the metal essential for building the economy of the expanding United States. Technological developments in the first half of the 20th century enabled larger scale, more economical mining of copper ores elsewhere in the U.S., and the world. This resulted in the drastic decline of mining in Michigan's Copper Country, so that little activity remained after World War II.

The Copper Range Railroad was built at the end of the 19th century as a captive operation of the Copper Range Company to transport copper ore from the mines to the processing plants, known as stamp mills. The mills were located next to large quantities of water, either on Lake Superior or the Portage River Waterway, which isolated the Keweenaw Peninsula from the rest of the Upper Peninsula and made it, in effect, an island. The distances were not great, generally less than 15 miles. The Copper Range (reporting marks COPR) built southwest from Houghton (HOE-ton), following the copper ore mines, 41 miles to the vicinity of Mass, where it connected with the Milwaukee Road at McKeever, adding general freight and forest products to its traffic mix. Branches to mines and mills were completed shortly, and an extension north to Calumet via Lake Linden opened in 1902.

Other lines were built or acquired in the years up to 1920

With Lake Superior as a backdrop, S12 200 shepherds copper loads bound for the mill at Freda over the bridge near Redridge on February 27, 1964.





to serve mines, mills, and forest-product operations. The road provided local passenger service and connected at McKeever with Milwaukee Road passenger trains, including the *Chippewa Hiawatha*, until sometime in the 1940's.

By the late 1950's, the Copper Range Railroad was just a shadow of its former self. Although very little of its line had been abandoned, declines in mining and the shift of freight to trucks had relegated it to mainly a weekday-only operation serving one remaining mine and mill, with occasional trips to the interchange at McKeever as traffic warranted.

At Houghton on that day in July 1958, my dad and I found Baldwin 100 sunning itself on the roundhouse lead, while 101 was switching a few cars in the yard. There wasn't much going on, and the rest of the family was more interested in finding a restaurant than in prowling the railroad yards. But it was interesting observing the yards and docks, which used to bustle with activity as boats unloaded coal and supplies for the mines while receiving copper bars from the smelters for Eastern mills.

My next encounter was in August 1961, on a high school student technology outing to Michigan Tech, the college in Houghton that was established in 1885 primarily to train geologists and engineers for the mining industry. I used the free time to walk the Soo Line's former Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic track from the college to downtown, and to ex-

Big day: April 29, 1964, saw the first multiple-unit run of DS-4-4-1000's 100 and 101. They hauled 1600 tons up the steep hill out of Houghton, a feat never before accomplished by a single Copper Range engine crew.

plore a bit more. The DSS&A (as I still thought of it—the Soo had taken over the "South Shore" just 7 months before) must have been occupied elsewhere with switching duties, so I headed for the Copper Range yard.

Lo and behold, all three of its engines were outside, but nothing was moving. It seems there was a strike at the mines, and since just about everybody at the railroad was laid off, the engines had been parked outside along with various other equipment normally kept inside, to prevent damage in case of a roundhouse fire. I busied myself photographing some of the unusual freight cars in the yard, as well as the road's 1940's-vintage homemade inspection car.

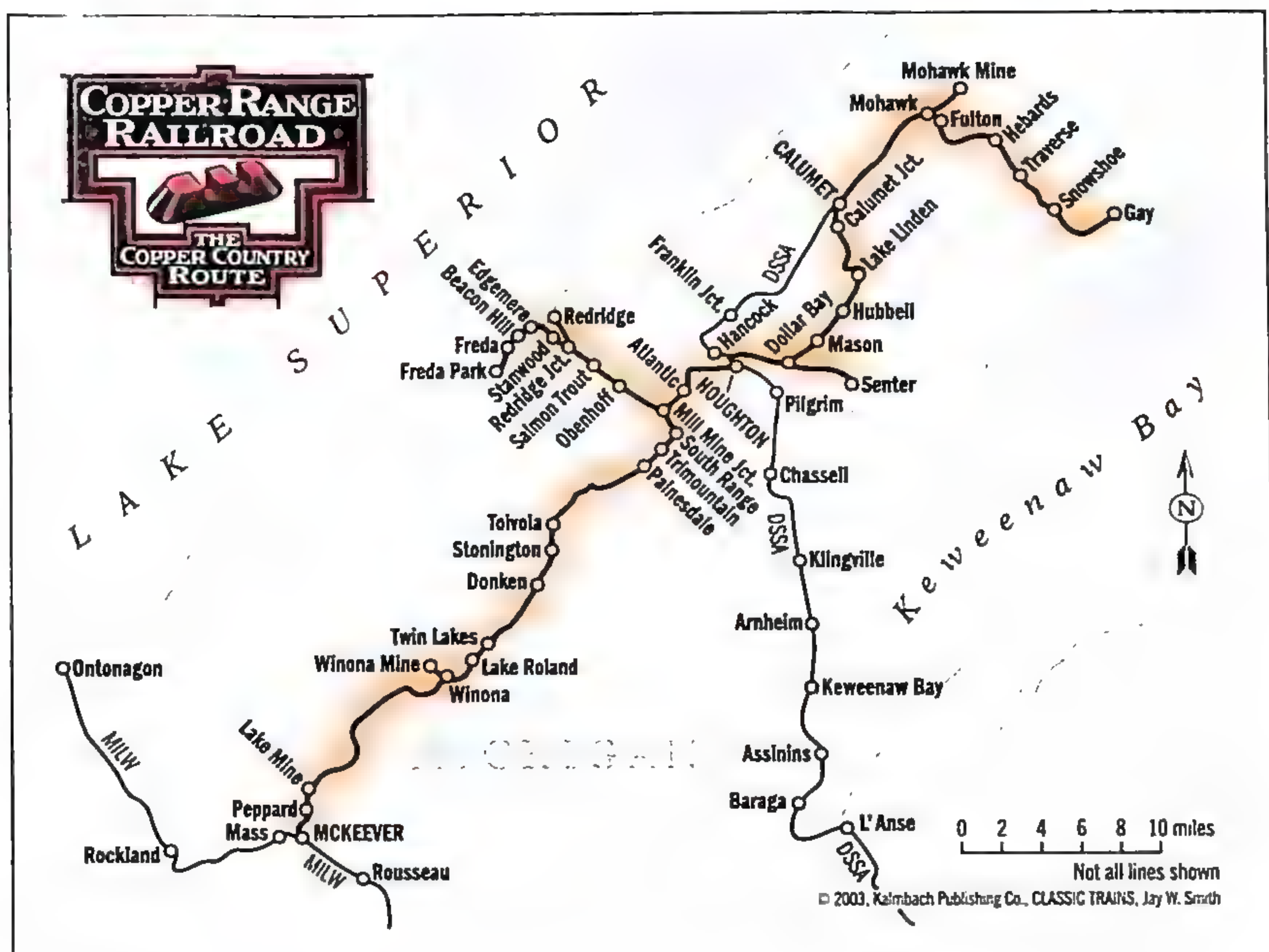
College and the Copper Range

In fall 1962, I was back in Houghton, beginning a four-year stint to get my engineering degree at Michigan Tech, and this allowed more contact with the Copper Range. My residence hall overlooked the Portage Canal, as we called it, and twice a week or so we heard a COPR Baldwin headed east on the Calumet line, its swing bell ringing and chime horns blowing for crossings. It would return later in the day with mostly pulpwood and sawlogs. Those must have been about the fanciest horns ever put on a Baldwin switcher, and the sound was great compared to the normal "blap-blap" horn most first-generation diesels had.

My class times and the Copper Range's schedule didn't

Author Anderson's second encounter with the Copper Range was on August 19, 1961. A mine strike had idled the railroad, but he delighted in the antiques he found at the Houghton yard, including the road's inspection car, made from a 1940's automobile, and two types of ancient ore cars.





mesh very well, and I was limited mostly to the Houghton yard area, since I had no car. With 200 inches of snow per year, there were few days in the winter when the sun shined and the Copper Range ran. And of course, not much happened on weekends. But in the winter of 1963-64, I became more serious about getting some pictures of this unique little railroad.

The Copper Range traffic pattern was stable, if not spectacular. Year 'round it hauled copper ore from the Champion Mine in Painesdale, the last operating mine south of the canal, west 12 miles to the stamp mill at Freda on Lake Superior. This amounted to perhaps 15 cars per day, usually handled with a daytime job out of Houghton.

One day in February 1964, several of us piled into a car and caught the ore run with loads at the big bridge near Redridge [pages 76-77]. We eked out shots with the last bit of daylight as the crew dumped the loads into the mill bins and headed back to Houghton. This same job would bring

back the "mineral cars," small covered gondolas with the concentrated copper for smelting in Hubbell.

Starting in 1963, there was a real boost to traffic in late spring through fall in the form of waste "sands" from a previous mill operation just west of Houghton. The COPR hauled the sands to the Freda Mill for reprocessing along with the Champion ore. Once or twice a week, a switch run would head for Calumet to gather up mainly pulpwood and lumber. Service had been discontinued beyond Calumet to Gay by this time. Two or three times a week, depending on the traffic, the COPR ran a McKeever turn. The Copper Range was anxious for every dollar it could get, so the freight usually left Houghton later in the day to get outbound cars to the Milwaukee at McKeever before midnight to avoid additional per-diem charges on the cars.

My only photographic encounter with the McKeever freight came on a Saturday in February 1964, the weekend of the annual Winter Carnival at Michigan Tech. En route





from Ironwood to the festival in Houghton, my wife-to-be, Judy, and I encountered engine 200 south of Donken, headed for McKeever. It was plowing a fair amount of snow from the previous evening, and the shots were too good to pass up, since the track paralleled the highway for several miles, so we briefly turned back. After getting the classic shot hitting a snowbank across a road at Twin Lakes, I had to resume course for Houghton to make sure my Cinderella didn't miss the Snow Ball.

Baldwins by ones and twos

The Copper Range's motive power was typical of a struggling short line. The Baldwin salesman had been busy with small roads, and the COPR was no exception. Engines 100 and 101 were purchased in early 1947. They were designated model DS-4-4-1000, with an eight-cylinder, normally aspirated engine and four separate exhaust stacks. In 1951 the COPR got its third and final diesel, Baldwin S12 No. 200, with a six-cylinder turbocharged engine.

The three Baldwins effectively dieselized the road, although a steam locomotive, 1907 Schenectady 2-8-0 No. 29, was held in reserve and occasionally used during peak traffic. Although rated at 1200 h.p., the 200 was not as well-liked as its 1000 h.p. siblings because of maintenance problems with its smaller, more stressed engine and turbocharger. The 100

Copper Range crews were well-acquainted with snow, and the winter of 1963-64 was no exception. On January 11 (above), No. 101 wades through the white stuff as it heads out of Houghton with pulpwood loads; in the distance stand the towers of the combination highway-railroad lift bridge over the Portage Canal. On February 8 (right), Anderson caught S12 200 plowing along with the McKeever train south of Donken. On February 27 (upper right), 200 headed home from Freda with covered gons and wooden caboose.

and 101 were favored for local switching and the ore runs, while the 200 tended to hold down the McKeever freight.

A watershed for the Copper Range was the installation of m.u. equipment on engines 100 and 101 by the roundhouse crew during the winter of 1963-64. The sands from Houghton had to be hauled up the substantial hill out of town en route to the Freda Mill. A single DS-4-4-1000 could handle only 10 cars, or about 800 tons. By m.u.'ing the two units, crew costs could be cut significantly. On Wednesday, April 29, 1964, the trial run met all expectations—the two units took 1600 tons up the hill without a problem.

Reflecting the importance of all aspects of the mining industry in the Keweenaw Peninsula, the event rated a headline, picture, and blow-by-blow article in the May 2 edition of Houghton's *Daily Mining Gazette*. After gathering some other sand cars set out by the previous night's McKeever freight, and picking up 20 cars of ore from the Champion Mine, the



Right: News of the Copper Range's abandonment petition drew Anderson back to Houghton on May 17, 1972, where he framed No. 100 riding the turntable before being bedded down in the roundhouse. After the road quit, 100 and 101 went to McHugh Brothers, a Pennsylvania firm then affiliated with tourist pike New Hope & Ivyland, where the pair was based. No. 100 was stripped and is thought to not survive, but 101 now works for New Jersey switching outfit SMS Lines as its No. 1293. COPR's third Baldwin, No. 200, is at the Lake Superior Railroad Museum.









two Baldwins and 45 cars headed the final distance to the Freda Mill, probably one of the heaviest trains the COPR ever operated.

Two last looks

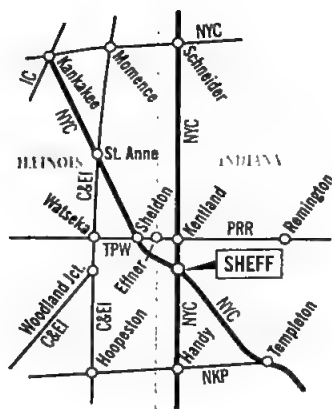
After I graduated Michigan Tech in 1966, job and family affairs prevented me from returning to Copper Country. The Champion Mine closed on September 11, 1967, and with it so did the Freda Mill. The railroad struggled to survive mainly with wood products and general freight traffic, but the end was inevitable. The Copper Range's petition to abandon led me back in May 1972, where I caught the freight at Mill Mine Junction returning from McKeever behind the 100, and followed it into town to record the engine being put away in the roundhouse [page 82].

The Interstate Commerce Commission granted abandonment in August 1972. By then, the Copper Range's operations were so erratic that it was difficult to predict when a train would run. On October 27—a beautiful fall day with no snow yet on the ground—I got word of the last run. I couldn't get out of work in Iron Mountain early enough to follow the train from Houghton in the morning, and missed seeing it in the McKeever yard, finding just a couple of cars that it had set out for the Milwaukee Road interchange. But about 2 p.m. I caught up with it at South Range on the northbound trip. The little train made it into Houghton in fading sun.

Trailing No. 101 was a Penn Central gondola car loaded with logs to be interchanged with the Soo Line, caboose 605, and an old non-interchange company flatcar that probably had been almost forgotten on some spur. Only one other railfan was present to record the ritual of spinning the 101 on the turntable and closing the roundhouse doors at the end of the day. The Copper Range was finished. ■

A quiet end: On October 27, 1972—the Copper Range's last day—101 trundled through South Range (above) with her steam-style bell swinging a warning. At the Houghton roundhouse (below and left) she was eased inside and the door was closed behind her for the final time.





One day at . . . Sheff, Indiana

Photos by Mert Leet

MERT LEET, a western New Yorker who'd settled in Chicago after his 1949-51 stint in the Army, returned to his prewar employer, Crown Can, helping canners in their food processing. "In the fall," he says, "my boss would cover Wisconsin, while I was sent to Indiana and Ohio tomato plants. I was able to catch the tail end of New York Central steam, especially on locals in Indiana. We'd fly from Chicago to Cincinnati early Monday morning, work the area with the salesmen, and come back Friday. Any time we'd drive to canners, I carried a camera under the car seat. When I'd see smoke, we'd stop and I'd hop out to take a train picture. My boss would laugh, but he didn't mind."

On one such Friday, January 30, 1953, Leet was motoring north and stopped at Sheff, an NYC crossing in northwestern Indiana, off U.S. 41 at

Earl Park. At the junction of Sheff, "F" Tower guarded the diamonds of NYC's Indiana Division main line (the old Big Four between Kankakee, Ill., and Indianapolis) and the north-south "Egyptian" line from Indiana Harbor to Danville, Ill. (South of Danville, to Cairo, Ill., the route was former Big Four.) Sheff was 92 miles from Indianapolis and 63 miles from Indiana Harbor.

A dozen passenger trains a day—including the *James Whitcomb Riley* and a nameless overnight run on the Egyptian line, to Harrisburg, Ill.—roared through Sheff, but in Leet's brief morning stop he saw just three freights. Two had L-2c class Mohawk 4-8-2's and one an H-5 class Mikado 2-8-2. Through the lens of his Argus C3, we get a glimpse of steam in its waning years in a far corner of the NYC empire, but in today's context, it was a valuable visit we all can treasure.—*J. David Ingles*



From the open-air observation "tower" (visible in the photo at the far right), Leet shot L-2c class 4-8-2 2801 working the yard (above). First, he shot sister Mohawk 2882 pulling around the wye and north into the yard (right and far right) on the "Egyptian" line, and then he caught H-5 Mikado 1350 (left) on a short train of company maintenance-of-way cars heading southeast on the Big Four.



Southbound odyssey

On riding Illinois Central's domeliner *City of New Orleans* . . . before the hit song made it famous



AS ONE WHO WAS BORN and raised on the Illinois Central and came from IC blood, my train-riding credentials on the "Main Line of Mid-America" bordered on the pathetic. My dad earned two degrees from the University of Illinois (in on-line Campaign), and upon receiving his Masters in Railway Mechanical Engineering in the 1930's, went to work for IC at its general offices. I was born in Chicago and lived the first 6 months of my life in a Chicago Hyde Park high-rise apartment that looked down on IC's 8-track speedway.

Then we moved to Homewood, 24 miles out, from where Dad commuted

to the IC offices. I put in hundreds of miles on the electric M.U. suburban trains on shopping and dentist's trips to Chicago's Loop, but I didn't get to ride any IC varnish, and we moved to the Detroit area when I was 15. I returned to downstate Illinois for college, but my paths to our Michigan home or our Chicago roots were mostly on the Wabash or GM&O.

After college I worked in Springfield, Ill., so I did log IC *Green Diamond* rides to St. Louis and Chicago. And while a token ride on IC's Iowa Division *Hawkeye* was part of a 1964 circle trip, my mileage map on IC's main line had not a smudge of ink south of Gilman, Ill., where the St. Louis route branched off.

Family vacation trips to Colorado in the '50's hooked me on dome cars, though, so when IC bought six dome coaches from Missouri Pacific in 1967 for the *City of New Orleans* and *City of Miami*, there was added incentive for me to ride IC's main line.

In February 1970, Carol (my future wife) and I found time for a two-night triangle railroad trip out of Springfield. The odyssey began on a Thursday, aboard GM&O's *Abraham Lincoln* to Joliet. Friends from Homewood picked us up for an afternoon of photography and an evening visit.

Next morning, we were on Homewood's intercity platform [above] to board IC No. 1 at 8:30 a.m. As a north-



J. DAVID INGLES

bound freight was entering Markham Yard and a Randolph Street-bound suburban train called at the adjacent high-level platform, the *City of New Orleans* rumbled in amidst swirling lake-effect snowflakes behind an ex-Florida East Coast E9A and an IC E9B-E8A duo: 2040, 2100, and 4031. Four cars back was our objective: IC 2210, one of five Pullman-Standard dome coaches built for MoPac in 1952. IC's *Official Guide* entry promised two dome coaches, but our 16-car *City* had only the one.

This was two years before Chicago folksinger Steve Goodman would write his wonderful song, "Ridin' on the City of New Orleans." He apparently had little taste for the bright lights, so it would

Amidst swirling snowflakes and flanked by a northbound electric suburban train and freight, IC domeliner No. 1 rumbles into Homewood, Ill.

fall to Arlo Guthrie and others to take the song to nationwide fame.

Goodman's "City," of course, stands for most every train in the immediate pre-Amtrak era. In February 1970, the nationalized network was just over the horizon, and even pro-passenger IC had seen the writing on the wall. Despite assigning domes to the *City of New Orleans* and *City of Miami*, IC had already largely gutted its timetables. The two *Citys* and the *Panama Limited* were the only trains south of Carbondale, Ill., 307 miles out of Chicago, although the "Illinois corridor" totaled five pairs of trains, concisely numbered, or renumbered, 1-10. The Chicago-Springfield *Governor's Special*, the Chicago-Sioux City *Hawkeye*, and a St. Louis-Carbondale run were IC's only other varnish.

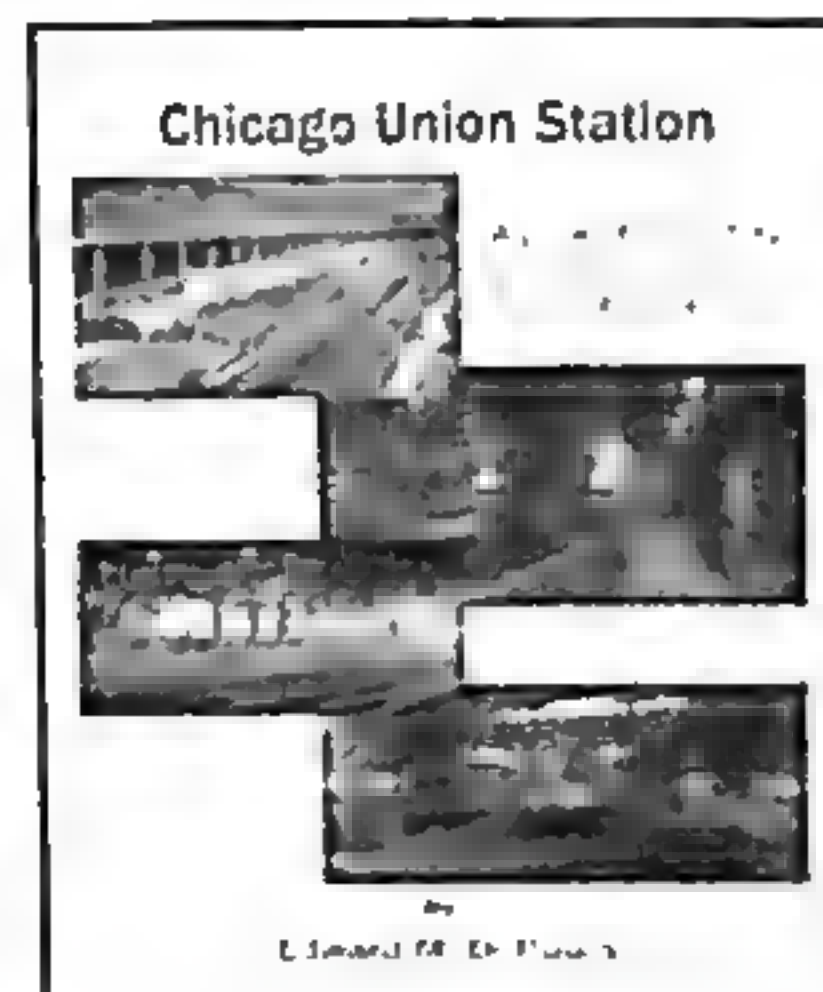
On our "southbound odyssey," we maintained a performance of about 20 minutes late, arriving in Carbondale at 1:10 p.m., 15 minutes down. Here the rear six cars were removed, leaving No. 1 a 10-car train as far as Jackson, Miss., where the diner and club lounge would come off. We left Carbondale 25 minutes late, then lost a bit more and gained some back as we made stops at Anna, Cairo, Fulton, and Dyersburg. We were only a few minutes off schedule arriving in Memphis at supertime.

With the evening at our disposal before we were due out for St. Louis, we grabbed a taxi to the center of downtown Memphis and had a nice seafood dinner and took in a movie. Around 11 we were back at Central Station, well in time for the northbound *Panama*.

I had planned this trip mainly to see the Main Line of Mid-America through the Prairie State in daylight from a dome, which we had accomplished on the *City*, but the third leg was a bonus—what turned out to be my only ride on IC's *Panama*. Purists would claim that by 1970 it wasn't the "real" *Panama*, what with coaches, no King's Dinner in the diner, and a split-rail/circle emblem, not a green diamond, on the E units' noses. They'll get no argument from me, but you take what you can get.

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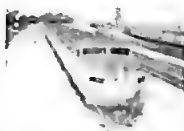
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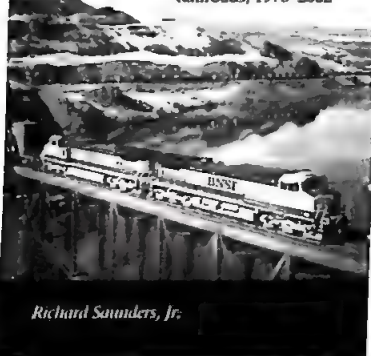
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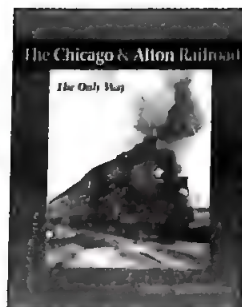
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The Way It Was

for Grand Central Terminal just 45 miles and 90 minutes down the pike.

With sparks flying from brakeshoes, mingled with the sweet ozone perfume, the train finally stopped, its engine way beyond the lumber yard. Two minutes later the conductor gave the familiar wave to the engineer, then woe to any village housewife who had neglected to rescue her laundry hanging on the line. Black smoke slowly engulfed nearby houses as the Pacific or Hudson began to bark and accelerate.

Barely able to get up to speed before having to cut throttle, every engineer commanding that power must've been frustrated, as the average distance between stations north of White Plains was only 3 miles. Furthermore, two stations sat on curves that limited an engine's tractive power to 12 cars on the return trip up the Harlem valley. The time was November 1946, a year after World War II ended, and for years, each weekday morning this drama had been playing, the train gradually adding more cars as more people moved out to Westchester County from New York City.

After years of commuting by bus to the subway terminal and then often standing for the long trip into New York, I looked forward to what I thought would be more luxurious travel. I quickly found, however that an hour and a half each way—sitting on a stiff mohair seat in a coach paneled with now dingy rosewood and having single window sashes that admitted frigid air in the winter and smoke in summer—was hardly the scene I had imagined.

Those old 88-passenger coaches had shuttled for years up and down the Harlem Division; their deteriorating frames and equipment somehow kept working but their condition was showing. Generators, for example, often were unable to satisfy night-lighting needs, with the result being semi-darkness. Southward, there was the need to shed steam at North White Plains, since it was unlawful to run steam locomotives in the Park Avenue tunnel. Thus occurred the necessary change to an electric locomotive, which added another 10 minutes to the already tedious stop-and-start trip.

For me the big daily thrill was watching that Hudson or Pacific (both types



NEW HAVEN RAILROAD: S. A. BOYER

"Deluxe" cars (on train 365 at Darien, Conn., in July 1947) were *not* what the author experienced.

were utilized) charge into my station and stop at exactly the same location each time. Then one morning, the train rolled in as usual, but—surprise—without its usual steam engine. In its place was an odd-appearing road-switcher type diesel. It emitted little black smoke, and made no improvement in running time, but it saved cost for management and was here to stay.

Two years later, double sessions in the Katonah school dictated a change, and we moved to Westport, Conn. Pat McGinnis had recently taken over the ailing New Haven Railroad, and his glib improvement promises validated my changing railroads . . . or so I thought.

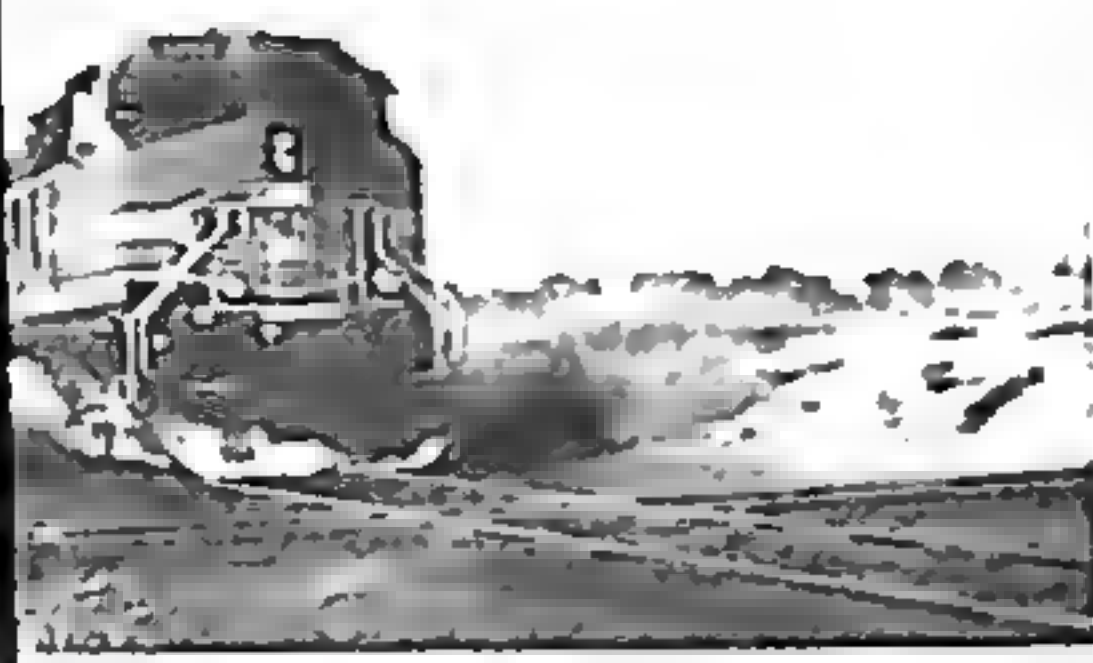
What Pat got actually was mostly the rag-tag of a once-proud railroad that had been milked early in the century and never returned to its former glory. Trains were a mixture of ancient, old, and newer cars and engines. To bring some life into the New Haven, some of the equipment was repainted black and red. However, even that failed to keep McGinnis on the job for long, and then the railroad continued as it had.

At Woodlawn, where the New Haven diverged from the third-rail New York Central, the NH thereafter received its power from overhead catenary wires, a continual source of trouble and expense. Profitable freight had almost disappeared and would fade further after Interstate 95 (which paralleled the line)

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The Way It Was

opened early in the '60's. Autos had long grabbed most of the passengers.

Although the elapsed time of the Westport-New York express was 40 minutes less than that from Katonah (same mileage), I soon learned the truth about no free lunch. In planning our move, I had failed to project the need for a station car with the attendant parking problems that soon required me to rent a parking space. There were also insurance, tax, and license expenses. Fares were much higher than on the Central, so the commute proved much more expensive with little real time saved.

I found a seat in what was once a handsome club car, its individual seats now covered with faded fake leather. Looking down between my legs, I was horrified to see the ties flashing by below, sections of the floor having rusted away. Although next time I tried to find a seat in a more presentable coach, the thought of that rusting car traveling back and forth between New York and New Haven as part of our daily train was not comforting. On occasion, passengers were not reluctant to express their fears for all to hear as the train rocketed along a stretch of straight track. "Hope we make it today," or "How long before we have a wreck?"

were not uncommon expressions.

Still, to the everlasting credit of the men and women who maintained and operated that decrepit equipment, the NH never had wreck that I knew of during the eight years I rode—just minor delays and breakdowns. Nevertheless, when our last child left for college, I studied all the timetables of divisions serving Grand Central and settled on the lower end of the old Harlem. Bronxville to New York was just 28 minutes non-stop.

We moved there for my final four years of commuting, and I enjoyed a cheaper fare, faster and more reliable trips, newer M.U. electric cars, and no need for a second automobile. At last the long-awaited retirement day arrived; a final trip to Bronxville, and a wife waiting to whisk us to Vermont.

In retrospect, the financially strapped railroads did a good job running a money-losing service they could not shed. Today, under the government entity Metro-North, more modern M.U. coaches, high-level platforms, and electrification of the Harlem Division as far north as Brewster, all ensure faster reliable service. Best of all, there are no more waits to change engines at North White Plains!—*Adrian A. Paradis*

'Big' engines at St. Paul Union Depot

For a 12-year-old, genuine awe resulted in invitations up into two streamliners' locomotive cabs

WHEN THOUGHTS TURN to big terminals from the glory days of passenger railroading, St. Paul (Minn.) Union Depot might not come to mind. But "SPUD," as they called it, was right up there in the big leagues. In its heyday, SPUD served eight railroads and handled 282 trains a day.

I experienced SPUD in its declining years in the late 1960's. Trains of Chicago & North Western, Chicago Great Western, and Soo Line were gone, and the last Rock Island train left in April 1969. But even then SPUD was a great place to watch Burlington, Great Northern, Milwaukee Road, and Northern Pacific passenger trains. Most of the time I did this by car with my father and brother. We would park at the wye east

of the depot which allowed trains to back in. For trains headed to or from Chicago via the CB&Q or off the GN and NP, a backing maneuver was required, but Milwaukee Road trains ran straight through. Inside the wye was the Union Depot roundhouse, which serviced GN passenger power and was home to SPUD's little switcher, a GE 44-tonner ["Bumping Post," page 98, Fall 2002].

The station building itself was a fascinating place. I would watch in awe as a maintenance man drove a polishing machine across the vast marble floor of the concourse. My brother and I would drop a quarter into a strange vending machine that produced a plastic molded model of the locomotive *William Crooks*, which pulled the first passen-

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Fallen Flags Remembered



WILLIAM D. MIDDLETON

An F7 sister on NP's *North Coast Limited* (in near-by Minneapolis) was just as "big" as "my" F9.

ger train in Minnesota in 1862 and was on display in the depot.

It was a thrill to take an escalator down to track level, anticipating a short streamliner ride over to Minneapolis or just to watch the trains. We did just that during Christmas season 1969, on my most memorable evening at SPUD. The depot was packed with travelers, something I'd never experienced before. The whole place had a bustling feel—this must have been what it was like in the 1940's! We began our visit at the Twin City Model Railroad Club's big O-gauge layout.

Then it was down to track level. It was plenty cold, but the chill didn't bother us as we watched the SPUD switcher scurrying about, toting passenger and express cars around to different tracks. Milwaukee Road offered up its westbound *Afternoon Hiawatha*, complete with Skytop observation car (removed from the consist in January 1970). Later in the evening from Minneapolis came the *Fast Mail* for Chicago. We admired its mix of E9's and F units. Nearby there was a switchtender's shanty, and the friendly switchman invited us inside to warm up.

The Milwaukee trains were just a prelude for the big show at SPUD. Each evening from Chicago came the combined *Afternoon Zephyr/Empire Builder/North Coast Limited*, a massive

train with seemingly dozens of dome cars. It backed into the depot, and then was broken up into the three individual trains. The first to leave was the *Afternoon Zephyr*, whose short consist was taken over to Minneapolis' GN station by the CB&Q E's that brought the big train up from Chicago ("the Q" had its own coach yard and engine-service area north of the GN depot). This left the *Builder* and *North Coast*, which were lined up on adjacent tracks. We walked up to the head end to examine the diesels—my dad was an airline man but had a keen interest in all things mechanical. On the GN train were newer engines—either SDP40's or SDP45's; NP, on the other hand, stuck with good old streamlined F9's.

To this 12-year-old, the diesels were a little scary, but I was able to get over my fear and cast an admiring glance up toward the cab of the GN train. The

window opened and the engineer stuck his head out.

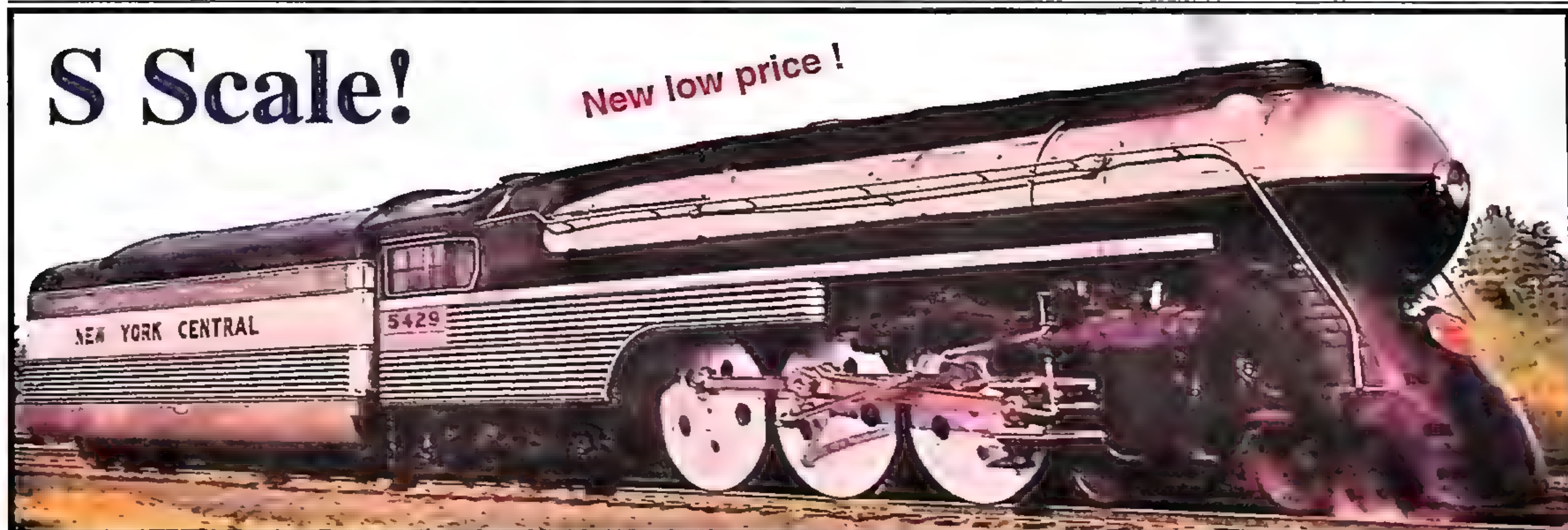
"It sure is big," I said, and the engineer shouted down, "Have you ever been on one of these?" "No, sir," I replied, and in an instant my brother and I were scampering up the steps and into the cab of the *Builder's* diesels, where we were given a quick course in what all the gauges and dials meant.

A few minutes later we were back on the platforms and had made our way over to the NP streamliner. We walked to the front to see if the NP's engineers were as friendly as GN's. Sure enough, when we got close to the F9, I cast my most sincere gaze toward the cab window, and, when it opened, I recited my "It sure is big" line. The NP crew was every bit as sympathetic as GN's, and we got a nice look around the warm, cozy cab of the *North Coast's* lead F9. Back on the ground, we watched as the

two streamliners departed into the night, keeping a sharp eye out as the lights from each car curved around the wye and the diesels accelerated up the steep hill toward Minneapolis and points west.

Such experiences were soon to end. I was back on the depot platform on the evening of April 30, 1971, as Burlington Northern's *Afternoon Zephyr*, which ran separately on Fridays only, became the last train to depart SPUD. Walking back through the concourse, I watched in sadness as employees removed all the train names from the arrivals and departures board.

Most of SPUD remains intact. The tracks and trainsheds are gone, but restaurants and offices now occupy the headhouse, and the concourse is used for storage. Indeed, there has been talk of making SPUD a stop for Amtrak trains. I hope that happens, but I'll



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always cherish the memory of the night kindly crews of the Great Northern and Northern Pacific gave a boy a chance to see what being an engineer out of SPUD was like. And those engines sure were big!—Steve Glischinski



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For us 500 there is a sense of escape. We are getting away from good old Camp Crowder and its radio transmitters, teletypes, and the code, plus the chow lines and all that, for just a few hours. Yes, the Sunday night *Meteor* out of St. Louis will be back in Neosho at 2:40 on Monday morning, and I guess we are all going to be tired.

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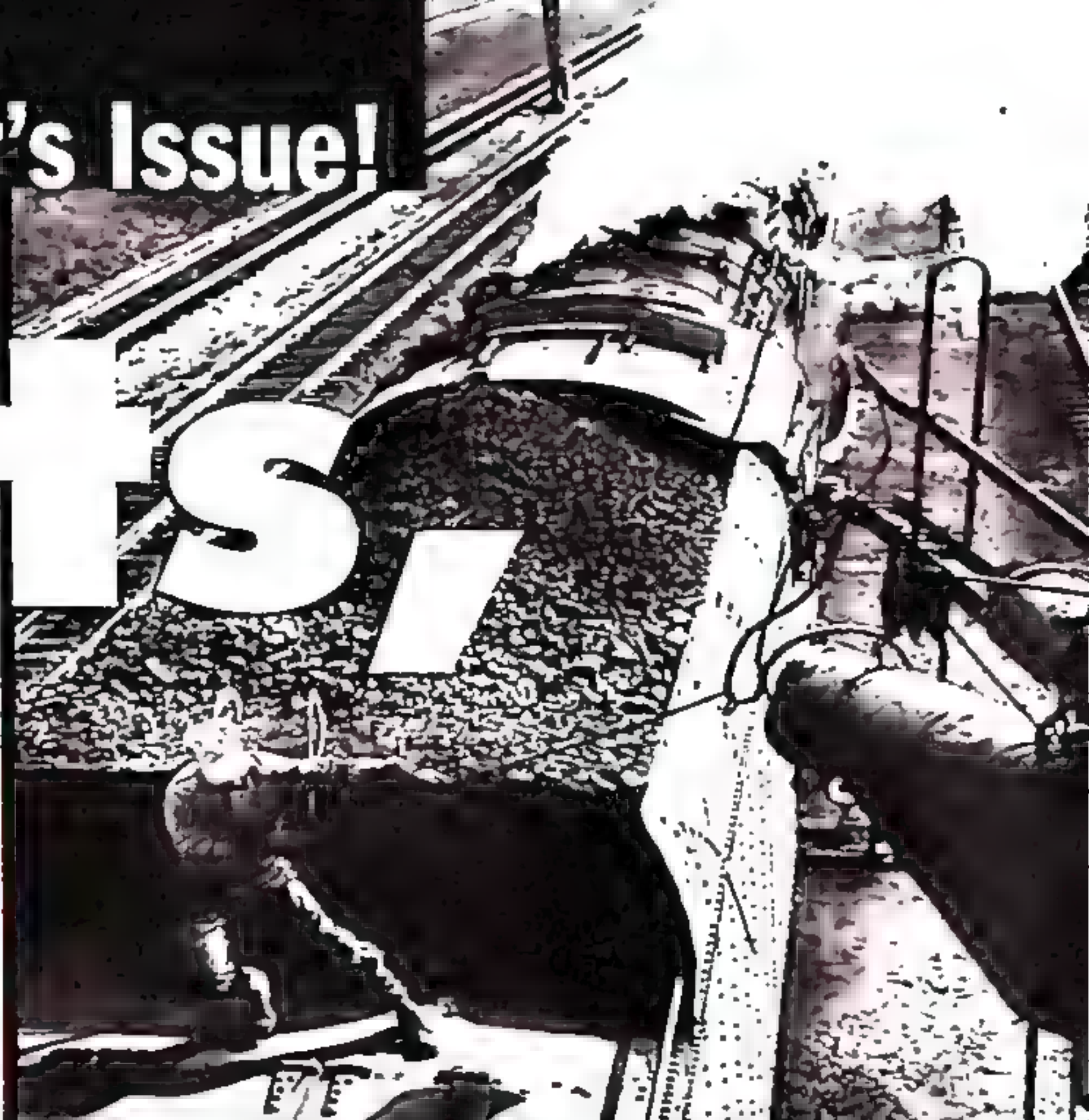
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Christmastime in the city

"Silver Bells," the 1951 Ray Evans and Jay Livingston song about the wonders of Christmastime in the city, makes no mention of trolley cars, but it evokes an era when they were familiar sights in downtowns all across the nation. You can almost hear that classic tune when contemplating this December 1946 view of Oklahoma City's Main Street—all that's missing is the snow. Oklahoma Railway double-ender 122 (St. Louis Car, 1930) looks right at home rolling beneath the holiday decorations spanning the bustling commercial thoroughfare. Alas, this would be the final Christmas for Oklahoma City's streetcars—buses took over the last lines the following April, and the trolleys were sold to Mexico City. For Christmas 1947, the only electric trains in the state capital were small ones brought by Santa Claus.





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UT IN NORTHWEST OKLAHOMA, the little town of Waynoka, population 1400, doesn't see much excitement, apart from the constant parade of trains passing through on Burlington Northern Santa Fe's main Midwest-California freight route.

Things may have been a bit livelier back when Waynoka was a Santa Fe division point, complete with engine facilities and a Harvey House restaurant and hotel. The town's real moment in the sun arrived in 1929, when it became one of the three train-plane transfer points for transcontinental travelers ["Coast to Coast by Rail and Air," pages 20-33]. Suddenly, Waynoka was in an exclusive club of cities that played key roles in the glamorous new service between New York and Los Angeles.

Thanks to advances which quickly made rail-air service obsolete, Waynoka's time on the national stage was brief, but those heady months are remembered at the Waynoka Historical Society. Located in the restored Harvey House, the society's museum has on display many items pertaining to the rail-air service. Several of the photos in our article, plus the one above, came from the society's collection. To learn more, call the museum at (580) 824-1886 or visit www.waynoka.org.

Those seeking an in-depth treatment of the rail-air service will want to get a copy of the Summer 2003 issue of *The Keystone*, the quarterly publication of

the Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society. That edition features a 65-page article by *Keystone* Editor Chuck Blardone on PRR's *Airway Limited* and other aspects of the service. Profusely illustrated and packed with information, it's perhaps the definitive study of this unique chapter in transportation history. Chuck also generously provided photos for our story. The Pennsy group may be reached at PRRT&HS, P.O. Box 712, Altoona, PA 16603 or www.prrths.com.

Fast freight in the hole

The "Fastest Freight on the Nickel Plate" article mentioned in the "Coming Next Issue" ad on page 97 of our Fall issue has been delayed. We plan to run this story in a future edition.

Copper Range heritage

In his story on the Copper Range Railroad [pages 74-83], Bob Anderson mentions that 2-8-0 No. 29 was kept as a reserve engine after the road's first diesels arrived. The 1907 Alco was revived in 1967 for service on the Keweenaw Central, a tourist line running out of Calumet on the former COPR Lake Linden branch. The KC quit in October 1971, and No. 29, the last Copper Range steamer, sits derelict at Ripley.

The news is better at Mid-Century Railway Historical Society in North Freedom, Wis., where Copper Range

Big day: Hundreds crowd the TAT hangar at Waynoka, Okla., to watch the christening of Ford Tri-Motor plane *City of Waynoka* in April 1930.

coach 60 was rolled out in September after a complete restoration. MCRHS volunteers spent 8000 hours restoring the 1903 wood beauty.

Author Anderson points out that a great source of information on the COPR is Kevin E. Musser's website, www.copperrange.org.

Picking up the pieces

As Ken Ingram tells us in his story on pages 70-73, since her retirement, Mary Elizabeth Chambliss has helped preserve railroad history by volunteering at the NC&StL Depot & Railroad Museum in Jackson, Tenn. That institution suffered a major blow on May 4, 2003, when a tornado ripped through downtown Jackson, destroying or heavily damaging buildings near the NC depot. Although the depot's roof was partially torn off, allowing rain to enter the building and cause further damage, the 1907 brick building remained structurally sound, and no exhibits were lost.

Closed all summer for repairs, the museum reopened in early September. It's located at 582 S. Royal Street and admission is free. To learn more, contact the museum at (731) 425-8223 or thedepot@cityofjackson.net. ■

John S. Ingles

Career railroader John S. Ingles, father of Senior Editor J. David Ingles and whose photos have occasionally graced these pages, died in Santa Rosa, Calif., on September 6, 2003, at age 95. The son of a Soo Line conductor and a former Harvey Girl waitress on the Santa Fe, John spent his 30-year career with Illinois Central and in the supply trade before retiring from the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton in 1968 as Chief Mechanical Engineer. He was a photographer, an O-gauge modeler, a live-steamer, and a member of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, Central Electric Railfans Association, historical societies for the IC, Pennsylvania, and Northwestern Pacific, and railfan clubs in Detroit and Denver.



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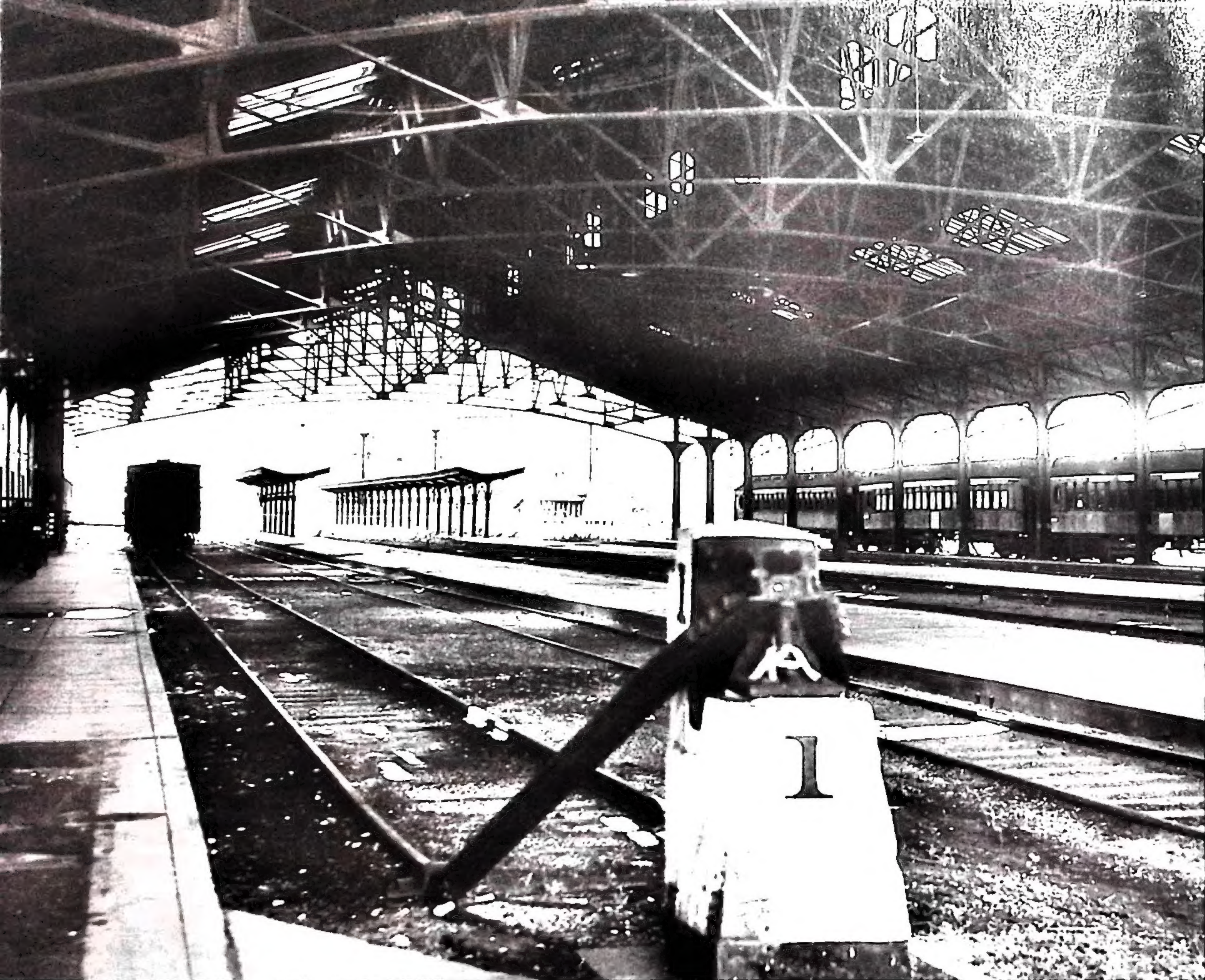
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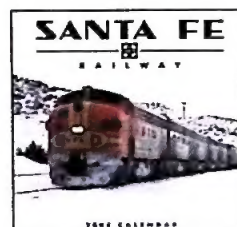
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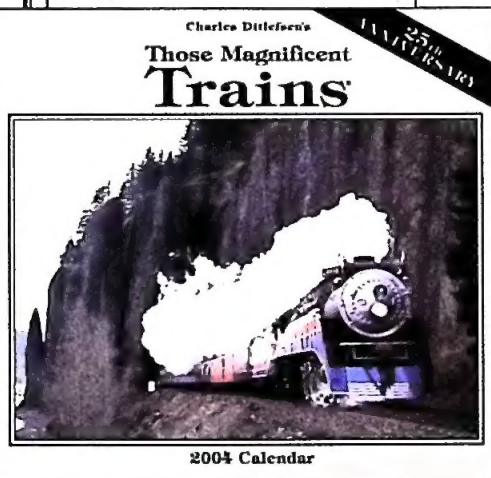
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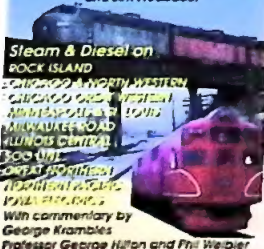
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